'WHISKY-PRIEST' POETS PAUL ZWEIG

THE NATION

NOVEMBER 14, 1966 35 cents

Upsala College
Library
East Orange, N. J

THE BOBBY PHENOMENON

JACK NEWFIELD

AMERICANS VIEW THE WAR

'To Get the Truth . . . I Just Don't Know'

ROBERT S. JOHNSON

The Children

MAURICE R. BERUBE KENNELL JACKSON, Jr. MURRAY POLNER

•

Poems by Children

NEWSPAPER NI
12-18-67R CLB-1314
UPSALA COLLEGE LIBRARY
EAST ORANGE
NEW JERSEY 07019

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

peace or prosperity

Beaver Falls, Pa.

DEAR SIRS: Peace candidates are weak in part because they offer no alternative to military means to insure a prosperous society in an age where new industries are shrinking. Johnson and Kennedy both failed to develop any plans for peacetime prosperity beyond the creation of a large white-collar class and filling up the colleges. The blueprint for such a plan has often been stated in your columns: increased trade with the Communist states, and great public works. I am waiting for an imaginative peace candidate who will accompany his hopes for peace with such a blueprint, and I believe he will go places when he appears. . . .

Theodore A. Tenor

something out there

Clinton, Mass.

DEAR SIRS: I do not think your attitude as revealed in the editorial [Oct. 31] "Can Dr. Condon See It Through?" is either honest or even worthy of *The Nation*. . . . Clearly, you feel that the whole UFO subject is the product of "the times" and can and will be explained by proper psychological study. I, personally, cannot believe you would take this stance, if you had really given this subject the careful looking into it deserves.

I believe something very strange is "out there," because some twelve years ago I just happened to get a good, clear look at three of them. In broad daylight, too. But, more important, I believe that something is there because not a few scientists of reputation also believe this. Some of them have also seen the "things."

Personally, I don't give a damn whether these "things" are from Mars or China! But I do give a damn that a magazine dedicated to the truth should so obviously go off the deep end on this subject. . . .

Albert H. Baller

stays with us

Melrose Park, Pa.

DEAR SIRS: I was actually going to let my subscription expire! You know: *so* many things to read, these days. But the last few issues, with the articles, etc., on China and the one on Johnson—*The Nation* stays.

Sylvia R. Freedland

correction

A regrettable typographical error occurred in the review by Frederick H. Gardner of Dashiell Hammett's *The Big Knockover* [*The Nation*, Oct. 31]. Mr. Gardner had stated correctly that Hammett died in January, 1961; the printed version gave the year of his death as 1960.—Editor

hard words

New York City

DEAR SIRS: It was generous of Harvey Swados to write in your issue of Oct. 10 ["Marx and Shame: Socialism Today"] that "old-time contributors to Communist publications like Victor Perlo and Herbert Aptheker do have something to contribute" in a Socialist Scholars Conference. This lavish admission is immediately followed, however, by the remark that Mr. Swados seems to fear the conference kowtowed "to those whose contributions to socialism have consisted primarily in character assassination." (*Continued on page 516*)

EDITORIALS

The Elephant Is Tempted

The place was Boise, Ida., the scene a hotel room; the time a week before the election; the hour 4:29 A.M. The restless former Vice President, out campaigning for Republican nominees, awakens with a start and summons his traveling staff to an immediate conference. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the purpose of Mr. Nixon's predawn conference was to plan "a counterattack against the claims of accomplishment" President Johnson was certain to advance on returning from his seventeen-day election swing through the Pacific. A day or two later in Philadelphia, Mr. Nixon announced that the leaders of both parties should meet with the President, in a bipartisan cold-war summit, as soon after the election as possible to plan "a strategy for victory." If some such conference is not held, and if the war in Vietnam drags on, then the Republican Party might be "grievously tempted" to run a candidate on a peace platform in 1968.

Just think of that! The opposition party forced by circumstances to function as an opposition party—grievously tempted to adopt the position which in 1952 enabled it to walk away with the Presidential election! To be shocked from bed at 4:29 A.M. by the thought that Lyndon Baines Johnson intended, in the final weeks of the campaign, to protect his exposed "peace" flank, is a measure of the bemused state of GOP leadership. As *Time* pointed out some weeks back, the Republicans, in trying to sound like hawks and doves, have managed only to sound like "dawks."

A similar befuddlement is shown in the shocked reactions of the Republican leadership to the extraordinary spread of the "housewives' rebellion" against rising food prices in the final weeks of the campaign. Caught off balance by the success of this movement, Republican spokesmen have expressed concern that those impetuous housewives were directing their fire at the wrong target—namely, the food processors and chains—and not at the Administration! But have these same spokesmen forgotten the effective use that Republican nominee Dwight Eisenhower made of high food prices in 1952? The Republicans may pick up twenty seats or sixty in this election, but any gains they make will be richly undeserved. A more striking example of the failure of an opposition party to oppose could hardly be imagined than the GOP's performance in this year's election. "To say where the government leaves off," writes Robert A. Dahl (*Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, 1966) "and the opposition begins is (today) an exercise in metaphysics." If we were frank with ourselves, as an electorate, we would be forced to concede that this year's campaign was conducted without benefit of an opposition.

The Boycotts

One point may be raised to mitigate the sins of the food industry. It does not gouge the public as unconscionably as does the residential fuel oil industry. All over the United States the price of light fuel oil is regionally the same at retail outlets, down to the last tenth of a cent per gallon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Moreover, as the volume of sales increases with the coming of cold weather, the price does not go down: it is jacked up. Obviously the local dealers do not fix prices all by themselves. The great oil combines not only furnish the oil but also the price guidance. In such a situation, without government help the consumer is impotent. He can boycott—if he doesn't mind getting pneumonia in the process.

Unable to engage in daylight robbery on this pattern, the food industry has relied on the supposed sheeplike acquiescence of the unorganized consumer to retain control. Especially the woman consumer, who has been pictured as wandering in a trance along the supermarket aisles, filling her cart with goodies and God-blessing America at every step. She has surprised everyone, most of all the officials at the chain headquarters, who have reacted as if a python had suddenly come out of the air conditioning and wound itself around their necks. Who, us? Why, we make only a cent, or a cent and a half, on the dollar. As far as the women on the picket lines are concerned, that only proves that a business can be highly profitable on small margin when the volume is high enough. Or, in the words of *Business Week*, "when the housewife provides enough will, the store owner finds a way"—to reduce prices.

The retailers may, as they assert, be getting more than their share of the blame. The Federal Trade Commission has found that the processors are as responsible as the retailers for high food prices. But the housewife cannot hit back at anyone but the grocer and butcher. She doesn't deal with the distributor, the processor or the farmer. The unhappy store manager may not be acquainted with these people either, but his boss knows them. Quite often the corporation is the processor as well as the retailer; sometimes it is even the farmer.

It may be that the revolt now in progress is only a palliative, but the short-term effects are startling. It seems we had lost the concept of *political* economy, which in John Stuart Mill's day was a duality taught in all the schools. The housewives have rediscovered the connection. They are engaged in political action to curb inflation where it hits them personally. It works. Prices are not a great immovable fact of nature. Men make prices, and women can unmake them.

The Republicans see price escalation as a useful campaign topic, but deplore the boycotts because they are directed at business instead of at the Democratic candidates. The connection between the price of food and the cost of the war in Vietnam is real enough (it is another aspect of political economy), but the Republicans do not find it convenient to establish that relationship. They would keep to the vague premise that Democrats are fiscal incompetents.

Barry Goldwater, however, is able to see the international implications; he has offered to lay odds that the rebellious housewives "are being led by left-wing groups," recruited by—guess who. La Pasionaria? No: Mrs. Esther Peterson, special assistant to President Johnson for consumer affairs. Her reply was that Mr. Goldwater's statement demonstrated "again the insensitivity of the Republican Party to the needs and problems of American citizens." Insensitivity? It is the understatement of the campaign.

IN THIS ISSUE

November 14, 1966

EDITORIALS

498

ARTICLES

502 Americans View the War: 'To Get the Truth . . . I Just Don't Know' — *Robert S. Johnson*

505 The Bobby Phenomenon — *Jack Newfield*

508 As Many as God Sends? Family Planning in Mexico — *Margaret Larkin*

512 Letter from Australia — *Hugh Weston*

513 The Medicare Bonanza — *Selig Greenberg*

BOOKS & THE ARTS

517 The American Outsider — *Paul Zweig*

519 Austrian Empire World — *Michael Hamburger*

520 Death in the Schools — *Maurice R. Berube*

520 I Don't Mind (poem) — *Carolyn Jackson*

521 Reducing Kids to Dust — *Kennell Jackson, Jr.*

522 War (poem) — *Sarah Mason*

522 I Am Mississippi Fed (poem) — *Ida Ruth Griffin*

523 How To Survive Childhood — *Murray Polner*

523 Theatre — *Harold Clurman*

524 Art — *Max Kozloff*

526 Films — *Robert Hatch*

526 The Cowgirl Ball (poem) — *Michael Silverton*

527 Crossword Puzzle — *Frank W. Lewis*

Editor
CAREY McWILLIAMS

Managing Editor
ROBERT HATCH

Literary Editor
HELEN YGLESIAS

Poetry Editor
MICHAEL GOLDMAN

Copy Editor
MARION HESS

Advertising Manager
MARY SIMON

Washington
ROBERT G. SHERRILL

Paris
ALEXANDER WERTH

Theatre
HAROLD CLURMAN

Art
MAX KOZLOFF

Music
BENJAMIN BORETZ

Science
CARL DREHER

JAMES J. STORROW JR. Publisher
ANNE C. ABRAMOVITZ Assistant

The Nation is published weekly (except biweekly in July and August) by the Nation Magazine Company and copyright 1966 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10014. Tel.: CH 2-8400. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing office.

Subscription Price: One year, $10; two years, $18. Foreign and Canadian postage: $1 extra per year.

Change of Address: It is essential that subscribers ordering a change of address give four weeks' notice and provide their old as well as their new address. Please give Zip Code numbers for both addresses.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Book Review Index and the Public Affairs Information Service.

THE NATION *Volume 203 No. 16*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Those Missing Exhibits

The photographs and X-rays taken of President Kennedy's body at the autopsy after the assassination have been turned over to National Archives by the Kennedy family—fourteen X-rays, twenty-five black-and-white negatives and twenty-six 4-by-5-inch color transparencies. The mystery of the missing exhibits, first brought to public notice with careful attention to detail by Jacob Cohen in these pages ("The Vital Documents," *The Nation*, July 11), has now been cleared up. The photographic material turned up, as Mr. Cohen suggested it might, in the possession of the Kennedy family.

Much of the wild speculation about the assassination, and the controversy over the Warren Commission Report, might have been obviated if these exhibits (which would clearly have been offered in evidence if Oswald had been placed on trial) had been turned over to the Warren Commission. Chief Justice Warren did see them, but neither the staff nor the other members of the commission had a chance to study them. Close restrictions have been placed on the availability of the exhibits; they will be open to federal law-enforcement agencies (the FBI) but scholars and other unofficial investigators will have to secure permission before inspecting the exhibits, and first indications are that such permissions will not be granted for a period of five years. News media representatives may have to wait even longer before gaining access to the exhibits. This would seem to repeat the mistake that was made in the first instance; the restrictions will simply invite further speculation and controversy. Eventually the public may learn what if any light the exhibits shed on controversial aspects of the Warren Report but the sooner they can be inspected by responsible scholars and investigators—and the news media—the better it will be for all concerned.

Duty To Say 'No'

Charles de Gaulle, if fate had not called him to be a world statesman, could have been a schoolmaster of formidable gifts. As it is, he loses few opportunities to instruct the world community, and he devises ingenious lessons for the purpose.

The most recent case in point is the revised French military code of discipline which will go into effect on January 1. Ordinarily, such a document would have only domestic significance, and some of the articles in the revised code—a man in uniform may now smoke a pipe, wear a beard and mustache, need not salute his superior officers in public places, may carry a package, but is still forbidden (this odd denial of gallantry) to give a lady his arm or kiss his parents in public—are of concern only to Frenchmen called to the colors.

But these are details of amendment; the revolution in this new code of discipline lies in the area of obedience. A French soldier is no longer enjoined to carry out his orders "literally and without hesitation or murmur." Henceforth he may refuse—indeed, he *must* refuse—to obey any illegal command. What is an illegal command? It is one that violates the Geneva Convention. And does the Geneva Convention cover guerrilla forces or only regular troops? Guerrillas, says the new code very precisely, are on exactly the same footing as the fighting men of a national army, "provided they have a program, an organization and a leader." From now on, says the code, a soldier must subscribe not to a "passive obedience" but to an "active obedience"; henceforth, "the duty of obedience does not relieve the subordinate of the responsibilities that the law places upon him."

President de Gaulle took the rough draft of the revised code with him on vacation at Colombey and there edited the stipulations and polished the phrasing with his own hand. It is a subject understandably close to his heart, for twice in his career—once when the troops of Hitler held his country and once when the troops of his country were ravaging Algeria—he called on the soldiers of France to defy their commanders in the name of higher principle. But just at this moment, the matter is not urgent: no French troops today are extracting information from enemy prisoners, burning noncombatant villages to flush out alleged partisans, or bombing indiscriminately in the cause of pacification. De Gaulle is clearly encouraging an entirely different set of men to face their responsibilities as human beings. It is not likely that *Stars and Stripes* will carry the new French code of military discipline, but news of this sort gets from army to army, and there are still Frenchmen in Saigon.

Neither Snow, Nor Rain . . .

In the three years since *The Nation* ran Stanley E. Cohen's "What Ails the Post Office?" (November 30, 1963) the service has continued to deteriorate. An equally poor showing in any other government department would result in a hue and cry from coast to coast, but the nation is so accustomed to a decrepit post office that only a murmur of complaint comes from the multitude of inconvenienced and injured users. To death and taxes should be added the certainty of bad service from the post office.

Recently the Chicago office suffered a kind of blackout, with millions of pieces of mail, mostly third and fourth class, tied up for periods ranging to more than two weeks. In numerous instances truckers could not get near an unloading dock and finally brought the mail back to the sender. Much of this burden was "junk" mail, but what will happen at Christmas, when the mountains of personal "junk" mail will be added to the sales messages?

Advertising Age was naturally exercised by the Chicago breakdown, but taking a broader view put its finger on the underlying cause. Americans are indebted to James A. Farley (now flooding the world with Coca Cola) for making dogma of the notion that the post office should be operated as a business, services being tailored to profit without concern for the users. The acceptance of this foolish doctrine by successive Presidents has resulted in a steady degradation of the service, despite the struggle of many postmasters and employees to do a decent job.

What other department of the government is told to make a profit and let the service go hang? Agriculture? The Secretary would be in physical danger if he appeared before a gathering of farmers in defense of the kind of service the post office routinely provides. Are the armed services making a profit? Or the Civil Aeronautics Board? Or the judiciary? Yet the average citizen has little to do

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

directly with most departments of the government, while the post office affects his life every day.

No organization can be much better in morale and efficiency than the people who set the tone at the top. In addition to the make-money concept, the post office suffers from the tradition that the Postmaster General must be a political errand boy for the President. Lawrence O'Brien is no worse than his predecessors, but while the service limps along he is out hustling votes for the Democratic Party. The Postmaster General is a member of the Cabinet and should not be treated as the President's majordomo. For their part, Congressmen should stop shortchanging their constituents by acquiescing in the principle that the post office is to be run like a candy store.

Crazy, Man

Something called Autoart, a press agent's gimmick out of Chicago, is about to strike a bizarre blow against the current drive for safety on the road. A young artist named Tom Strobel, abetted by a Chicago Chrysler-Plymouth dealer named Mel Wolff, is now engaged in turning out for public sale a line of cars guaranteed to be aesthetic treats. The paint jobs vary from geometric Op art patterns ("red and blue checks cause a startling optical after-image") to overall floral designs reminiscent of World War I camouflage.

Any motorist who has driven the turnpikes with the sun in his eyes or struggled with the dappled light thrown by bordering trees will receive the news of Mr. Wolff's art patronage with mixed feelings. Selling cars is a dog-eat-dog business and no one can blame a dealer for getting publicity where he can, but if Chryslers and Plymouths painted to look like fields of daisies or eye-twisters out of the *avant* galleries are now to wheel into the hellbent traffic, Ralph Nader will have to be recalled to action. The campaign to beautify the roadside must stop at the roadside.

Children and Politics

Project Head Start is a preschool program for 4 to 5 year olds. In "Head Start to What?" (*The Nation*, September 5) Ivor Kraft wrote that Head Start should not be conducted as "a cheap, massive, harum-scarum program buttressed by false claims, publicity stunts, IQ gimmickry, and the pretense of nine-week short courses for 4 year olds as a major means of salvaging Americans from poverty." Mr. Kraft's article drew some sharp retorts from readers, but a full-scale study is in general conformity with his thesis. The study was directed by Dr. Max Wolff of the Center for Urban Education in New York, sponsored by the Ferkauf Graduate School of Education of Yeshiva University, and supported by funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity. Some of the conclusions were favorable: Head Start was found to provide the preschool child with desire for further knowledge. But this gain was rapidly dissipated by poor teaching and uninspiring curriculums in subsequent schooling. "Head Start," Dr. Wolff concluded, "cannot substitute for the long overdue improvement of education in the elementary schools which have failed the Negro and Puerto Rican children."

Under present conditions, the children of the poor are denied both preschool and elementary school education that could give them a fair chance in later life. Oligarchies in the South and elsewhere would prefer to keep them as they are. But whatever their failings, programs of the Head Start type should not be surrendered to reactionary politicians. A tendency in that direction is quite obvious. Writing on "The New Plantations" in the October 24 *Nation*, Marvin Hoffman and John Mudd described the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM), a virtually all-Negro organization, as "the only poor-controlled and anti-poverty project in the state that has the resources and the orientation to develop into an effective, creative force in the society"—provided Senators John Stennis and James O. Eastland, and their colleagues in the white power structure, North and South, do not have their way.

Like other Head Start programs, CDGM was a project of the Office of Economic Opportunity, headed by Sargent Shriver. For the past two years it had been conducting programs for some 12,000 children in twenty-eight Mississippi counties. Mr. Shriver praised it as an innovative program vitalized by participation of the poor. Last August, however, he changed his mind. Some reports trace Mr. Shriver's turnabout to pressure exerted on the White House by segregationists. This Mr. Shriver indignantly denies. He says he cut off funds after his inspectors had uncovered nepotism, payroll padding, excessive salaries, misuse of cars for civil rights activities, and other irregularities. As a substitute for CDGM, he instituted a new program, Mississippi Action for Progress (MAP). The directors of MAP include two members of the $1,000-a-head President's Club; Aaron Henry, president of the Mississippi branch of the NAACP; and Hodding Carter, editor of the *Delta Democratic Times*, and a moderate in racial matters.

Some of the asserted irregularities probably existed. What is firmly established, however, is that the charges against CDGM were brought *after* a decision had been reached to replace it with an organization less objectionable to the white power structure in Mississippi. This would seem to be a clear denial of due process. CDGM should have been given a chance to answer the charges before action was taken, one way or the other.

Walter Reuther, James Farmer, Dr. Martin Luther King, Dr. Joachim Prinz and many other liberal leaders have protested Shriver's procedure. Underlying it there appears to be what Roy Reed, writing for *The New York Times* (October 23) from Mississippi, described as a feeling among both friends and enemies of CDGM that "a wider issue was whether Federal money should be used to organize blocs of the poor that threaten the traditional control of communities." Mr. Reed says further that "Mr. Carter and other liberals contended that the group went beyond that and had begun teaching a separatist, 'apartheid' philosophy among Negroes, brainwashing them against rising into the middle class and thus making it easier for radical leaders to control them."

The issue is thus one of national scope. If the decision was motivated as its critics assert, and if this is to be the policy henceforth, all the programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity may become outposts of the *status quo*. Nothing would better please the Stennises and Eastlands and their counterparts all over the country.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMERICANS VIEW THE WAR

'To Get the Truth . . . I Just Don't Know'

ROBERT S. JOHNSON
Mr. Johnson is publisher of the Auburn (Wash.) Citizen.

Auburn, Wash., is only thirty minutes from the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, where the Marines enplane for the ten-and-a-half-hour trip to Vietnam. And nearby also is Madigan General Hospital, where casualties from Vietnam are brought home. This geography produces in Auburn an urgency about the war that few towns in America have had thrust upon them.

However, the reaction pattern of the community, tested in six weeks of interviews, is still one of adherence to official propaganda as handled by the Seattle and Tacoma newspapers that circulate in the area.

The Auburn *Citizen,* a weekly newspaper, has taken a forthright anti-Vietnamese War stand, and the reaction has been full of surprises. The town's power structure in terms of advertising retailers is made up of about 50 per cent of businesses inherited from fathers who fought in the First World War. The sons, when they are not outright Goldwater supporters, fall into line behind President Johnson's war policies, while cursing him for medicare, minimum-wage legislation, civil rights and housing reforms. The city council, comprised preponderantly of businessmen who inveigh against government spending, devotes much of its time to devising applications for federal supports of city projects, among which is the extension of city utilities to a $70 million Boeing plant that is being built near the town.

Responses from even the most pro-war reactionaries have been couched in variations of "I don't know, but it seems. . . ." They feel almost to a man that the news is being managed, and that this government and the Chinese are artificially inflaming the minds of their people with half-truths and angled reports.

Comments from Auburn's citizens indicate that they think the news is being managed to retain popular backing for our participation in Vietnam's struggles, despite the fact that LBJ's criterion for this participation—a stable Vietnamese government—is obviously impossible.

Robert Eskew, employed by a water district association, says in a neighborhood bar: "The only difference between LBJ's Vietnamese policy and Batman is purely semantic."

"I accept the way LBJ's running things—to a certain extent," says Ray Stebner, a speech therapist in the area's schools. That "to a certain extent" is a key proviso. In those random cases where confidence in LBJ is expressed, it is usually qualified by such phrases as "up until lately" or "the last few days I've been thinking it over." To these observers, the Administration is beginning to look increasingly like the surgeon who, in order to operate successfully, must avoid human involvement with the patient. That such a policy goes against the traditions of many Americans is obvious in their troubled comments.

Most of these men are convinced that the news they receive about battles, casualties, victories and retreats is a tissue of P.R. images. Yet they continue to hold opinions which, by their own admissions, are based solely on this tainted information.

"They're covering up," said George Pain, a school counselor and veteran of World War II. "I think we're waging a much deeper war than they're telling us about. If I were the type who ate up this John Birch crap, I'd most likely say the North Vietnamese have no rights. But they do. We should withdraw if the Communists win in a free election. We should retain a little honor. Who are we? How can we play God?"

On the other hand, Pain, the father of five children, active in church work, a bright and alert participant in many local projects, says: "Let's bomb Hanoi. We're justified by stopping communism. We're on the horns of a dilemma; either way we're going to be hurt."

James Rice, Sr., a dairyman who served in France during World War I, is also troubled by the handling of the news: "You read the news and listen to the Fulbright Committee, and you just have to read between the lines. I don't know whether we've been given the exact truth or not. Correspondents seem to talk quite freely. The underlying principle must be a delicate thing, and you can't help but admire the President for keeping our commitment.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"To get the real truth, I don't know. It's such a complex thing, I just don't know. I don't like to see our boys get shot over there unless we can do some good, and I'm beginning to doubt we can. Those people don't think the way we do. The Communists are going to win in the long run—even if we have an election—they will just bide their time and take over in the long run."

The question of an election in Vietnam sticks in the minds as either a ludicrous or a profoundly serious matter. There is little middle ground.

"It looks to me," says Auburn Mayor Gaines, who runs a refrigeration business on the side, "like a free election over there is an impossibility, an insurmountable task. We would really lose face all over the world if we pulled out, though. Yet I have a hard time defining who the Vietnamese people are, and I can see how the newspapers distort things after my small experience in politics."

One of the Mayor's best customers, in case he is having a hard time identifying a Vietnamese, is a woman named Jean Wong who was born in Saigon and now operates a restaurant in Auburn.

"Vietnam is a very rich country," she explains excitedly. "Japan fight for it. China fight for it. French fight for it. Grow everything there. They all want it. I think Vietnam should be independent of the Chinese and the United States —free!"

Mrs. Wong, who is no fool, tried to do business in Saigon, and ended up emigrating. Asked what she liked best about America's Constitution, she unhesitatingly said, "the Fifth Amendment. You can have your own lawyer. You don't have to testify against yourself. You can have bail. It gives you real protection, real freedom."

Two salesmen working on identical jobs, one of them the father of five children, the other father of three, take militantly opposite stands:

H. Don Kupfer, 32, a former printer with one year of college, says: "I think it's a good thing. If I wasn't married and had three kids, I'd join the Army and volunteer. I can't think of a better place to protect the American people."

Sam Williamson, 31, who served in Korea, says: "I don't think there's been enough facts put out for anyone to decide whether we should be there or not. The best years of my life were spent in the Army, and I wish I'd spent 'em somewhere else. Our leaders know what they're doing, but they must have some reason other than fighting communism. We didn't do anything about Hungary and several other small countries. Then all of a sudden we just jump into Vietnam."

The reactivation of the programs to confine conscientious objectors in civilian public service camps, the extension of the draft, and the discussion about drafting college candidates, have stirred a heated exchange in Auburn, where a junior college has recently opened its doors.

"I'm absolutely sick about this college business, not exempting them," said Mrs. Joan Finnigan, president of the State Psychological Association, Division of School Psychology, and a vigorous participant in numerous civic and school efforts. "The army won't take the high school dropouts if their IQ is below average. Yet many of these boys are clamoring to get in. They come to school and beg for

help to get in the Army, not realizing that their IQ is keeping them out. In the meantime they are drafting our college-potential young men.

"This could kill off all our intelligent young people, and pretty soon the country will be run by the less able. There is a future for the mentally retarded and slow learner after all—they'll be the statesmen of the future.

"And I resent being the pawn of a political machine. If the United States really feels democracy is all this important, it would be refreshing if we would really wait for the underprivileged to ask our help. They obviously aren't getting enough volunteers. They've had to up the draft, which is a good indication of how young Americans feel about it.

"This whole issue involves whether there is a justification for war and whether we have the right to impose our philosophy on other people, and whether our philosophy is any better than that of other people. We pride ourselves on not being an imperialistic nation, but time after time we set out to make democratic satellites."

One man deeply upset by the effect of this war on young Americans is Judge George Fiori, a justice of the peace who serves a district with 67,000 population. The judge is also a farmer, the father of five children, and was with the Army in France from 1950 to 1953. Despite his eminence in the community, the judge is only 35.

"I only know what I deduce from the newspapers on Vietnam," he explains. "The way they censor the news nowadays, how'n hell can you know anything? It's an insult to our intelligence to believe in our position in Vietnam. How can we know whether LBJ, Rusk and McNamara are telling us the truth? Truth has to be predicated on trust today, and who can trust them?"

The judge, who this year gave the Memorial Day speech in the city park for the American Legion, is also president of the local mental health clinic, active in many clubs, an ardent Democrat, and always willing to interpret the law humanely for young people.

"Adults ask youths to sacrifice this way in Vietnam," he points out, "and this creates tremendous conflict with youths who look for stability from adults. A youth looks for his norms from adult society, and finds it in great conflict with itself and asking him to risk his life for them. Per-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sonally, I feel that this state of affairs is horrifying. It will lead to the destruction of individual judgment and when it does it will destroy the essence of our republic. This is totally unacceptable to anyone who uses logic or common sense. Who knows North from South? It won't meet the test of any thinking person, this Vietnam business. This whole thing is a snow job."

Judge Fiori, questioning the legal position of LBJ in this undeclared war, maintained that the intent of Congress in giving Harry Truman emergency powers in the Korean conflict was limited to Korea. He pointed out that there is no way now of checking a President, and that our forefathers would never have approved of such license.

"But how do you unring the bell?" he asks. "The President is moving with the power of a dictator this way."

Meanwhile, the people discuss with less than enthusiasm the latest commercialized Bob Hope junket to war fronts, and are beginning to realize that the TV make-believe world of Gomer Pyle and McHale's Navy are commercializations as suspect as Buz Sawyer and Steve Canyon in the funny papers. The Madison Avenue retailing of patriotism has become, as Thoreau said about politicians in another time, "a maggot in their heads."

On those few occasions when reality breaks through, as notably in the case of a recently returned Auburn veteran, public reaction is as contradictory as the many opinions already quoted.

Dave St. Pierre, 24, a discharged Army vet, says Vietnam was "organized madness. There's so much politics involved over there, you just don't know what to believe. The men don't know what they're doing over there. They tried to convince us that it was right and honorable, but I'm not convinced. They aren't accomplishing what they set out to do. They'd have done it by now if they knew what they were doing."

Asked why he was revealing his feelings when so many servicemen remain mute, St. Pierre said: "I'm all right now because I'm out of the Army. I couldn't say anything before. People are scared to say whether they're for or against this war. If they don't say, what're you going to do? Who'll ever know?"

Reactions to St. Pierre's remarks, which were published in The Auburn *Citizen*, ran the range from outraged patriots to perplexed taxpayers. Many tried to discredit St. Pierre on the basis that he was a mere soldier and couldn't understand the grand design of this undeclared war.

The confusion and lack of agreement in the opinions expressed regarding this nation's involvement in Vietnam indicate in Auburn an instability and lack of coherence as great as that which presumably afflicts South Vietnam itself. The few coherent critics are lost in the welter of ignorance and confusion, and the lack of solid facts with which to develop an understanding of the problem runs like a drumbeat through all the discussions.

The state's two Senators, Warren Magnuson and Henry Jackson, are LBJ men down to their shoelaces. Jackson is known as "the Senator from Boeing" because of his vociferous support of defense spending in the aircraft industry, and he is much stronger at election time locally than is Magnuson who was nearly beaten by a right-wing Republican in the last election. On the other hand, Magnuson is stronger in Washington, D.C. But both men have been coming in for some heavy criticism for going mechanically along with the Administration, and admiration for Oregon's Wayne Morse seems to be growing among the local citizens.

One comes from talking to this cross-section of Americans with the impression that, without our prosperity to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provide a point of common interest, there would be little or no political agreement about our foreign involvements. What seems to unite Americans, in fact or fancy, is their vision that they hold an impregnably strong economic position in a world plagued with political dilemmas generated by the economic frailties of smaller nations.

Possessing this assurance of our economic and political superiority, Americans do not profoundly question the decisions of Congress or LBJ and his Cabinet. Contradictions are ignored, logic warped to fit a justification for continued prosperity, and personal morality is viewed with disdain as being faintly tainted with mental instability.

It is appalling that so few Americans will discuss the war in Vietnam as a moral problem. Talk inevitably turns to strategy and tactics, of which Americans know nothing. That no man, as Shelley pointed out, has the "right to kill his brother," is scarcely considered. "It is no excuse," Shelley added, "that he does so in uniform; he only adds the infamy of servitude to the crime of murder." The reality of social values seems to have been in Auburn the chief casualty of the war in Vietnam.

Each day recently about 180 Marines have been flown in to Sea-Tac Airport for an hour and a half layover before taking off for Vietnam. They arrive after midnight to minimize contact with the public. These boys come from California, talk about home in the Midwest, discuss their girl friends, or stare morosely into a cup of coffee in the airport café.

"I'll save money over there," said one recently. "I get food, clothing, $65 a month and battle pay." He added that his brother had been in Vietnam two and a half years and volunteered for another hitch. "He's a kook of some kind."

"The one I feel sorry for is Johnson," said another young Marine too young to have voted in 1964. "So he pulls us out and the Communists take over. People won't like him for that. If he leaves us there, some of us'll get killed. He can't win either way."

One young Marine, who looked as though he belonged in junior high, turned to his side-kick and said: "Have you ever wondered what you're doing here?"

Too young to vote but old enough to die, they are dressed in fatigues so they can go right to work when they arrive in Vietnam in ten and a half hours. If they are under 18, they are sent to Okinawa or some other Pacific base, presumably to incubate until they are old enough to be killed in Vietnam without raising an outcry at home.

People in Auburn, like many other grass-roots Americans, are questioning without any facts on which to formulate questions—and most of them distrust even those "facts" they get.

THE BOBBY PHENOMENON

JACK NEWFIELD

Mr. Newfield is an assistant editor of The Village Voice, *New York. His first book,* A Prophetic Minority, *has just been published by New American Library.*

The Saturday Evening Post. Time. Newsweek. Atlantic Monthly. Harper's. The New Republic. One by one, this election autumn, they have all published cover stories on a junior Senator, ninety-sixth in seniority, 41 years old, who sits hunched and dreamy in the last row of the great chamber. His name is Robert Kennedy and his political fate has became an obsession to multitudes, from Georgetown to Capetown.

Two years ago Kennedy was anathema to the rebellious young and intellectual middle aged of America. They said he had a cop's mentality, a mugger's instincts and an emperor's ambition. In the wake of Dallas, the inside dopesters prophesied that the more genial, less combative Edward Kennedy was the real family entry in the Presidential sweepstakes. In the 1964 Congressional elections, James Baldwin, I. F. Stone and Gore Vidal [and the editor of *The Nation*—The Editor] endorsed Kenneth Keating over Robert Kennedy.

During 1965, Kennedy cautiously took his stand one centimeter to the left of Lyndon Johnson on Vietnam, on Latin America, on nuclear proliferation, on urban poverty. Most people mocked his motives. Then suddenly, this year, antagonism to the man liberals had been deriding as the "Irish Roy Cohn," turned to respect and then, among younger voters, flamed into passion.

In January, he criticized the Justice Department for denying an Arlington Cemetery burial to war hero and Communist Robert Thompson. In February, he broke with the President on Vietnam and urged direct negotiations with the National Liberation Front. In March, he visited Delano, Calif., to lend his prestige to the dignity of the grape strikers' cause. In May, peace marchers picketed the White House with placards bearing quotations from Kennedy and Fulbright. In June, he journeyed to South Africa to denounce apartheid as an evil as monumental as fascism's gas ovens. Then he came back to New York to energize the city's fatigued and faction-split Reform movement for a winning primary war in behalf of a good-government judicial candidate. In August, he hectored Administration bureaucrats on national television for allowing the war on poverty to falter.

Thus, on Labor Day, 10,000 impoverished Texas farm workers chanted "*Viva* Kennedy" at the steps of the capitol in LBJ's home state. In October, anti-war protesters greeted President Johnson in New Zealand with signs reading, "Robert Kennedy for President." By November, dreamers and fringe liberals were pasting "Kennedy and Fulbright in '68" bumper stickers on their cars. And tough-minded pros, who read all the polls, were saying it wasn't wholly impossible. Hippy intellectuals labeled it all "a happening"; the alliteration-oriented editors of *Time* proclaimed it a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Bobby Boom." The bemused Senator himself just refers to it as "this thing."

This sketch attempts to wrestle with only two dimensions of "the thing." Does Kennedy deserve the mantle of liberal leadership that has been bestowed on his Beatle brow? And what will he do with that leadership in the pit of Presidential politics?

To begin with, Kennedy's complex liberalism is cut from a cloth other than the traditional welfare-good government patterns of the 1940s. It has a philosophical base to it, not unlike the notions expressed by Albert Camus in the *Myth of Sisyphus*. Fate is cruel and often absurd, but vulnerable man must make the effort to push his heavy burden up the slope of history. Man must combat the plague, even if he knows it is hopeless. Kennedy is a pessimist and a fatalist, but also an activist. He has no taste for emotionalism rooted in simplistic slogans, and is, therefore, an impossible leader for the anti-war movement. He respects reflective iconoclasts like Murray Kempton and Senators Fulbright and McGovern more than he does aggressive dogmatists like Senator Wayne Morse or the ADA's Joseph Rauh.

Arthur Waskow, author of five books and resident fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, acutely describes Kennedy as "a new kind of liberal, in the same way the SDS and SNCC are new kinds of radicals." Waskow adds: "Bobby is a post-cold-war liberal, more oriented toward peace than collective security, more concerned with the nonworking poor than the labor unions, not so mechanistically anti-Communist, tuned in on the new generation's emphasis on individual acts of conscience, the existential act."

Kennedy's carefully crafted major speeches go beyond —or, more exactly, dig deeper than—the "more, better, quicker" clichés of the old liberals, who remain tuned to a paternalistic federal bureaucracy. Kennedy understands—or intuits—that the poor need dignity and a sense of participation, or that the coming convulsions of the Third World will be spawned by squalor and frustration, not the cadres of Mao or Fidel. The following are quotations from two speeches the Senator delivered earlier this year:

> The deeper part . . . is in the gulf which separates the Negro from the white power structure which governs him, and, in the failure of the Establishment to afford him full participation in shaping the governmental services he receives. For 300 years the Negro has been a nation apart, a people governed by a repression that has been softened to the point when it is now only massive indifference. The Watts riots were as much a revolt against official indifference, an explosion of frustration at the inability to communicate and participate, as they were an uprising about inferior jobs, education and housing.

And if that sounds New Leftish, listen to Kennedy on Latin America:

> In every nation of this hemisphere—certainly in the five I visited in November—we will find strong allies in our battle for social justice. We will find young men and women, proud of their country, but also aware that a century of progress must now come in a decade. . . . They will welcome—we must welcome—the revolution of our time. . . .

There seem to be only two legitimate criticisms to make of Kennedy since he was elected to the Senate. One would be that he has not been insistent or visionary enough in his dissents from the Administration's Southeast Asia policy. But, as I have already suggested, rhetoric and appeals to passion run against the grain of his personality; by nature he is a loner, a needler and a critic. In a recent interview he explained his season of quietude on Vietnam:

> I stated my feelings on negotiations in my speech of February 19. After that point I made a decision to let President Johnson implement his policy, to give him time to try it, because these are all hard problems. . . . Also, I sometimes get the feeling that things I say provoke the opposite response from the White House. . . . But should there be further escalation of the war, I will feel free to state my ideas about it.

The other point that might be made against Kennedy is his enduring puritanism (more accurately, perhaps, Manicheism). Before the Senate hearings on LSD last spring, his office put out a press release against the hallucinatory drug, warning of its growing use in the ghettos. Friends quickly pointed out to Kennedy that the drug was alien to most Negro slums and was used mostly on college campuses and in bohemian subcultures like Berkeley and Greenwich Village. During the hearings the Senator was less tough on the pro-LSD witnesses than was his younger brother; if he is not an advocate of reforming our repressive narcotics and abortion laws, he is not a headline-hunting crusader against the beards and beats.

Robert Kennedy may not be as scholarly as Fulbright, as hot for Congressional reform as Clark, as diligent a day-to-day legislator as Mondale or Muskie or as vigilant on civil liberties as Gruening, but he is close to being the most solid all-around liberal in the Senate. And how many people said that about John Kennedy or Lyndon Johnson?

Speculation about Kennedy's political future must distinguish sharply between 1968 and 1972. As far as '68 goes, Kennedy thinks it impossible to dislodge the President from the head of the ticket. A consummate politician, he knows that, regardless of what the polls might say and no matter how many primaries he might win (only fifteen states hold them), no incumbent President of Johnson's political dexterity is likely to lose control of such a manipulative situation as a national nominating convention. And almost no one in the Kennedy inner circle takes seriously the prediction of William Shannon in *Harper's*, that Kennedy's real objective is the Vice Presidential nomination in '68. My own guess is that, given the glandular antagonism between the two men, Johnson would rather lose to a Republican than have history record that he won re-election only because a Kennedy was his running mate.

Although Kennedy's circle thinks a '68 run is "not feasible," they are irrevocably closing the door on the option. Should the Johnson consensus continue to crumble, should his popularity continue to plummet, should the war become wider, then the Senator would probably review the situation early in 1968. Until then he can do nothing except be a good Senator, gain exposure and continue to point a gently scolding finger at the Great Society's warts. The crisis-in-the-cities hearings will probably pick up again in February, and Kennedy will be there, alternately melancholy and angry, pummeling some more double-talking bureaucrats. In February, the President will offer a bill

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

increasing social security benefits by 10 per cent; Kennedy has already introduced a countermeasure to boost benefits by 50 per cent, co-sponsored by nine other Senators, from Prouty of Vermont, to Morse of Oregon.

Meanwhile, a band of peaceniks and disaffected Democrats have launched a seemingly quixotic committee to draft Kennedy and Fulbright in 1968. Bereft of top-level political brains, money or publicity, the shoestring guerrillas have ignited grouplets in sixteen states so far. They plan, without Kennedy's permission, to enter slates of delegates pledged to him in the District of Columbia and the winner-take-all California primaries. They also plan a write-in drive in the first-in-the-nation New Hampshire primary, recalling how another New England favorite son, Henry Cabot Lodge, won that state's primary on write-ins in 1964.

If the war is settled, these gestures will quickly seem absurd. But if instead we become more deeply mired in Vietnam, Kennedy would be forced against his judgment to reconsider, and the whole thing, nourished by our national guilt over Dallas, could get out of control. It is improbable, but hardly impossible.

The prospect for 1972 is another story. Kennedy will be 47 then, Humphrey 61. As of today, the Vice President seems like a paper tiger; he has lost almost all his old union-minority-academic constituency to Kennedy, without really gaining the business community or the big-city machines. And the Senator has gained almost all the young with his wit, rebelliousness, candor, glamour, activism and odd combination of tough-mindedness and compassion which the young find so attractive in other culture heroes like Bogart, Goddard and Bob Dylan.

Kennedy likes Humphrey personally, while he has little personal affection for Johnson or his own generational rival, John Lindsay. He thinks the liberals have been too fickle in deserting the Vice President on the single issue of Vietnam. But I suspect myself that the defections have been so massive precisely because they have roots more fundamental than just the war issue. On a spectrum of issues, Humphrey's response became fixed in 1948, and he seems today unable to deal with the post-1960 issues of urban poverty, technology, bureaucracy, the Third World insurgencies, the breakup of the Communist camp. The urban crisis? Humphrey is against the Civilian Review Board. China? Humphrey is for containment. Latin America? Humphrey is for intervention.

In addition, the Vice-President is burdened with an unimaginative, feud-poisoned staff; his recent urgent efforts to recruit a few anti-Kennedy Stevensonians to his entourage have fallen flat. Kennedy, in contrast, is building a young, brilliant staff that includes 29-year-old Adam Walinsky and former Peace Corps maverick Frank Mankiwicz. Also, he works closely with such ex-New Frontiersmen as Richard Goodwin, Pierre Salinger and Burke Marshall, which occasionally provokes wholly exaggerated dispatches revealing a government-in-exile plotting a restoration.

Robert Kennedy's biggest barrier to the Presidency seems to be not the endlessly scenarioed 1972 Democratic Convention but his nameless 1972 GOP rival. Polls continually show such a polar split on Kennedy and the Kennedy name that no matter how decisively he beats other Democrats, he is at best a standoff against Republicans. The Harris poll of September 26, which reveals him outrunning the President 39 per cent to 37, rates RFK only 50-50 with shopworn Richard Nixon, and gives him only 49 per cent against George Romney. And should Kennedy run in 1972, after twelve years of Democratic rule, the "time for a change" slogan would be hard to blunt.

Also, Kennedy is unlikely to lead a united party in 1972. Johnson, not known for Christian charity, might try to sabotage him, or at least fight him at the convention, if not directly with Humphrey, then with a symbolic rival, like John Connally or Russell Long. Kennedy is bitterly unpopular with the segregationists in the South, with the business and banking communities, in the anti-clerical Bible Belt and, almost irrationally, among conservative anti-Catholic older Jews. Against Nixon, the Harris poll gives Kennedy only 42 per cent of the Protestant vote; he gets only 43 per cent of the vote of those over 50. When William F. Buckley, Jr., speaks of the "inevitability of Bobby," or when Gore Vidal says, "America now has a three-party system: the Republicans, the Democrats and the Kennedys," they are letting their dislike and envy cloud their perceptions.

Kennedy, of course, can still change in a variety of directions; there is no assurance that he will hold to the course he is pursuing in 1966. He will respond to events. The future is inscrutable, fate is capricious, facile prophecies are arrogant. But some day Robert Kennedy will lead his legions—the young, the black, the alienated, the romantic, the educated—to Armageddon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AS MANY AS GOD SENDS?

FAMILY PLANNING IN MEXICO

MARGARET LARKIN

A journalist who has lived in Mexico for the past fifteen years, Margaret Larkin is the author of Seven Shares in a Gold Mine *(Simon & Schuster).*

"As many as God sends."

If you were to ask almost any young Mexican woman how many children she wanted, that would even today probably be her answer. Two months after her marriage, her friends would begin to question, "Are you 'carrying' yet?" To admit that she was not yet pregnant would cast doubt on the potency of her husband or on her duties as a wife and a Catholic.

In Mexico, as in all Latin American countries, large families have been the custom and the ideal. Among the peasants, sons meant helpers on the land and support in old age. In the upper classes, a large family was a symbol of success. It proved not only that the man was a real "*macho*" —a he-man—but also that he could afford to maintain eight or ten children, to clothe them, to feed them (and even overfeed them), to educate his sons, and to marry his daughters to men in like positions. [See "Mexico Resists the Pill" by Arthur F. Corwin, *The Nation*, May 11, 1964.]

Today, however, one can sense the beginning of a new attitude, as the population explosion bears down on individual families. Perhaps Mrs. C. R. de M. said, "as many as God sends" when she was married at 13. Now at 35, having borne eight children, she has come to Mexico's pioneer birth control clinic for help. "My husband gives me seven pesos a day [56c] and with that I have to feed and clothe my children. Some have no clothes at all, the rest are poorly dressed. I have barely enough to feed them beans. We live in a wooden hut and pay 30 pesos in rent, but who knows how long we can stay there because in the center of the city they no longer want wooden huts."

A generation ago many of those whom God sent He took away again. Infant diarrhea, pneumonia, measles and whooping cough carried them off. Mexican artists have loved to paint "the little angels," decked out with flowers and a gilt crown, as they were carried to their tiny graves and straight on to Paradise. Today, while the birth rate remains almost unchanged, the death rate has dropped dramatically. Between 1930 and 1964, it was more than cut in half. Out of every 1,000 babies born in 1930, 135 died before their first birthdays; in 1964, the figure was 69.5. Today's bride of 18 may expect to have eight or ten living children by the time she is 35—with some years of childbearing still ahead of her. Mexico has one of the world's fastest growing populations. There are now more than 40 million Mexicans; the demographers say that in twenty-three years there will be 80 million if the rate of increase is maintained.

Until recently, little concern was expressed about population. Leaders of the country, like those of the Church, adjured the people to be fruitful and multiply. Although deploring the lack of buying power among the impoverished masses, economists insisted that more people would create more wealth — despite the fact that unemployment and underemployment constitute a major problem in Mexico. (The man who sits all day in front of a dozen little piles of peanuts is counted as "self-employed.")

In the past few decades, Mexican industries, roads, dams, schools and health services have increased at an astounding rate. Yet in real terms the country is standing still as the proliferating population swamps these advances.

The problem has not gone unnoticed by Mexico's planners. The solutions offered have been more irrigation, higher production from the land, new industries and *justicia social.* Until recently there has been no suggestion, in public at least, that population limitation might be a way out. But in 1965, the "delicate subject" of birth control burst into the open. No doubt the fact that the Vatican was willing at least to consider possible changes in the Catholic attitude had something to do with this new frankness.

The discussion began with circumspect "debates" in which the question was examined from various points of view. In an eight-part series in Mexico City's leading newspaper, *Excelsior,* a Senator, and a university professor who was described as a lawyer, economist, biologist and geographer, deplored any movement toward control of birth. An economist, also from the National University, cautiously advised "careful study" of population control. Two eminent women came out strongly in favor of making contraceptive information and help available. They were Diego Rivera's elder daughter, a lawyer and formerly a Congresswoman, and Dr. Matilde Rodriguez Cabo who has held important posts in the government health services.

Other publications were more forthright. *Tiempo,* a magazine patterned on *Time,* published a special 6-page section in November, 1965, entitled "Population—Control or Catastrophe." It was a serious, well-documented statement of the problem, and it boldly went so far as to explain all known methods of contraception, including the pill, giving brand names and prices. It also listed the name and address of the Asociación Pro-Salud Maternal, the first birth control center in Mexico.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the article was a frank appeal to the government to take over the problem. This was not made by the magazine itself; the climate of opinion is not yet ready for such editorial directness. It came from the mouths of two of the three poor people whom *Tiempo* had interviewed on the subject.

Pedro Martinez, who earns less than $1 a day, has fathered eleven children in twenty-six years of marriage. The eldest is 25, the youngest 3 months. "So many children are a misery for the family and they grow up without proper education or preparation for life," he was quoted as saying. "But what shall we do? We are Catholics and we don't want to fall into mortal sin. Neither do we want to see our children dying of hunger." Then, obviously without much hope, he added: "I have heard that in some countries the government not only helps families with many

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

children but also shows them how to have fewer children. But there is nothing like that in Mexico."

Margarita Gutierrez de Trejo, aged 39, and the mother of nine (including quadruplets), said to the reporter: "May God forgive me, but I think that the government ought to send doctors and nurses to teach us how to avoid having children without it being a sin."

From the number and variety of articles on the subject, it would seem that a campaign is under way to prepare the Mexican people for some kind of public action, even government action. It would not be quite fair to say that Mexico has a controlled press. Dissident opinion is tolerated up to a certain point and "Freedom of the Press Day" is celebrated with great fanfare. Nevertheless, such widespread discussion of a hitherto unmentionable subject could not have taken place in Mexico without the tacit approval of the authorities. With an appearance of probing for public reaction, conflicting statements by officials have appeared, often within the same week.

Sen. Antonio Flores Mazori and two Congresswomen, Martha Andrade de Rosal and Aurora Nadia Millan, associated themselves in the following public statement: "The Mexican Government respects the parents' right to determine the size of their families and in the case of poor families with many children, makes available through its Health Ministry the best advice in each case." *Ovaciones*, one of the "popular" papers wrote: "In spite of the fact that official medical institutions are reserved in respect to the problem [of population limitation] preoccupation with the fact has been notable. For some time contraceptives have been a part of the basic pharmacology of Social Security, and the Ministry of Health permits the sale of pills in drugstores without a prescription." (A month's supply can be obtained for less than a dollar.)

In another article, a functionary of the same Ministry of Health declared that the manufacture of contraceptive pills in Mexico was illegal!

As the falling death rate has increased family size, many Mexican women have tried in their own ways to limit their families. Prolonged nursing is an ancient method, based on the belief that a nursing mother cannot conceive. This custom is one factor in infant deaths. Whereas in a country like the United States most deaths before the age of 1 year occur in the first months of life, often from congenital defects, in Mexico most occur in the last third of the first year. Mothers' milk alone does not supply enough nourishment in these latter months and poor mothers cannot provide the additives that American mothers give as a matter of course. This primitive resort to prolonged nursing (often up to two years) results in malnutrition or in infections and diseases which the starved little body cannot resist.

"Giving" a child to a grandmother, a godmother, or a willing relative, is another not uncommon way of solving the problem. Some women adopt more desperate measures. "Babies are sold for 20 pesos in the General Hospital," Marie Guadalupe H. Mitchell, director of Orientation and Defense of Women, was quoted as saying in *La Prensa* (February 15). As I was writing this article, the newspapers reported the case of a woman who had given birth at a public hospital, only to slip away twelve hours later leaving her infant behind!

The rhythm method, sponsored by the Catholic Church as the only acceptable means of limiting family size, is rejected almost universally in this Catholic country. Poor women, especially, complain that it is too complicated, that it is unsure, and that husbands refuse to cooperate. A rhythm clinic set up near the Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe last year had to close for lack of patients. At the end of six months it had attracted only forty-four women. The most common method of limiting family size is abortion. Women try to abort themselves by using herbs or other primitive methods, or they go to midwives.

Absolute statistics are impossible to obtain, of course, but some notion of the size of the problem may be gathered from the number of women bleeding from incomplete abortions who are admitted to hospitals. In the first quarter of 1965 the three main government hospitals in Mexico City reported 4,014 births and 1,316 abortion cases—a relationship between births and unsuccessful abortions of 32.95 per cent. It is notable that at the General Hospital, where the poorest go, the relationship was 53.5 per cent!

A study of the abortion rate was made by the Asociación Pro-Salud Maternal, referred to above. Among the 1,000

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

women interviewed, 307 admitted to from one to *twenty-four* abortions. The total number was 6,118! One of the women expressed her feelings as follows: "May God forgive me for those abortions, but I simply could not go on. I think that it is better to take the pills than to have abortions; that is why I have come here."

The Asociación Pro-Salud Maternal was founded in 1958 by Dr. Edris Rice-Wray, graduate of Vassar and the School of Medicine of Northwestern University. She also holds a degree in Public Health from the University of Michigan and was the director of the first field study of Enovid, in Puerto Rico. Working for two years in Mexico for the World Health Organization, Dr. Rice-Wray perceived an "unfulfilled need" to bring the birth and death rates into balance:

> We had to organize privately because at that time, in 1958, neither government nor educational institutions were willing to enter the field. We began with the aid of a research grant and a private donation and with the assistance of a small group of Mexican people. The staff included a social worker, a nurse and myself. In the first month our social worker found sixteen women who were willing to come for information about family limitation. In the first year I treated only 286 women. It was impossible to publicize the work; the Mexican Health Code forbade this. But one woman told another and out of their need, more and more began to come. By the end of the second year I was thrilled that we had received more than a thousand patients.

Eight years later, in 1965, monthly patient visits numbered 3,900 a month in the main clinic and five subsidiary clinics that have been established in proletarian districts. The number of new patients received in 1965 was almost double the figure for 1964. Whether she can afford to pay 10c or $2, every woman is given a thorough gynecological examination and a cancer test. A social worker helps her determine what she can afford to pay for her monthly supply of pills or the insertion of an intrauterine device.

Although the clinic is concerned with helping the people who come to it, basically it is a research center. Between 1959 and 1966 it completed twenty-eight research projects on thirty-one compounds and dosages. Dr. Rice-Wray was a member of a scientific group of fourteen invited by WHO to Geneva in 1965 to sum up world experiences with oral gestagens. Along with many investigations in other parts of the world, her studies of long-term users of these compounds have contributed to the recent decision by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to remove the previous four-year limitation on use of the pill.

The clinic initiated a professional training program in 1965, and in that year forty-seven doctors and six nurses from eight countries completed the two-week course. Besides studying the population problem in Latin America and the world, they were instructed in all available contraceptive methods. They received practical advice on how to go about setting up a family-planning clinic in a Latin American Catholic country. With the exception of the University of Chile, no medical school on the continent includes such material in its curriculum.

Mexican physicians and sociologists have for long assumed that their people would refuse, for religious and cultural reasons, to accept family planning. The thirteen doctors and seventeen social workers and nurse-interviewers now working with the Asociación Pro-Salud Maternal have learned a great deal about their patients, almost all Catholics. Some of the things they have discovered are in direct contradiction to accepted ideas.

"In Mexico, as in other Latin American countries, there is a gap of understanding between intellectuals and the masses," Dr. Rice-Wray explained. "Among traditional beliefs held by intellectuals is that Mexican men want large families as one proof that they are *machos*. We find here that the men are realistic, too, when it comes to facing the problems of a large family. You see them here in the clinic every day, holding young children while their wives are being attended. Ninety-eight per cent of our women come with their husbands' consent.

"The women try to obey the Church and they pray to the Virgin that they won't get pregnant again. When they do they are apt to feel that they have fulfilled their duty to the Church. Since they can't take care of another child, they have an abortion. Naturally, because of the conflict engendered, many simply stop going to Church altogether. The realistic liberal Catholic leaders know this and that is why they are fighting for change in the matter of contraception."

As many as God sends? How will the Catholic conscience absorb the totally new concept of spaced children and family limitation? The Asociación Pro-Salud Maternal is fortunate in having as consultant a Catholic priest trained in psychology as well as in the tenets of his Church. Father Alfonso Orozco works at the clinic with the permission of the Archbishop of Mexico. From his private interviews with the patients, he is in an excellent position to assess their life situations, their spiritual conflicts and their motives for seeking birth control information. In an article summing up interviews with 150 women he points out that many of them feel justified in taking their destiny into their own hands after they have borne a number of children. He quotes Mrs. S. Z. de G., 28 years old, married for thirteen years and the mother of five. "I am a Catholic because I pray to whom I should pray," she asserted. "As far as the pills go, I know that the priests are right in many things but they can't help my situation of having children I can't care for or educate. Anyway, I have done my duty. I have five children and my health does not permit more."

Mrs. R. E. de P. presented another aspect of the problem. She is 31 years old and and in twelve years of marriage has had nine children, all of whom are alive. "I came here because I no longer want to 'buy' more children," she told the priest, using a common euphemism for conception. "I am a Catholic and I believe I am doing right to use the pills because in this way God will give me life to watch my children grow up. If I continue to 'buy' more children I will probably die and my children need me. Children are beautiful and I love them very much but now I don't want to have any more so that I can take care of those I have."

Mexican women are reticent, but to the sympathetic priest one woman said: "Some have told me that I am excommunicated and maybe they are right, but I follow my conscience. Now I am afraid to go to church. But on the other hand, since I use the pills and am freed of the fear and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

constant anguish of a new pregnancy, there is greater love between my husband and myself and our children. We always discover new things in our love."

Perhaps the most encouraging sign of change is the recent establishment of a parallel all-Mexican organization which is beginning work with funds from the International Planned Parenthood Association and with the support of a distinguished board of directors. Señor Gerardo Cornejo, its executive director, represents in his own person the problem of the population explosion. He is one of fifteen children, ten of whom survived to adulthood. His father was a peasant who received land after the Mexican revolution. Two of his brothers have remained farmers; other brothers and sisters live modestly; he is the only member of his family to become a professional, although he is now educating a younger brother.

"The Fundación para Estudios de la Población enjoys the moral but *unofficial* support of the government," Señor Cornejo stated when I talked with him, and he went on to give me convincing evidence. The medical director of the organization is also medical director for the Maternal and Child Health Service in the Ministry of Health, certainly a close enough tie to indicate government interest. The president of the board of directors, which includes doctors, professors, demographers and engineers, is a prominent banker; the vice president is a former minister of government. In discussing the six urban and two rural clinics which his organization is opening this year, Señor Cornejo mentioned that the physician in charge of a clinic at Piedras Negras in Coahuila is also in charge of maternal and child health services in that state.

"The government must proceed very slowly and cautiously," he told me. "It does not want to risk an explosion of popular feeling such as took place in Brazil recently when it was announced that funds for family planning had been made available to the country. But I can tell you that in one government hospital here in Mexico City all of the women who come in bleeding from incomplete abortions receive birth control information when they leave, and if they want the pills, arrangements are made to supply them at whatever price they can pay." The whole purpose of the Fundación, Señor Cornejo said frankly, is to prepare the basis for government action to control the population. The machinery for doing this already exists in the thousands of clinics, health centers and hospitals of Mexico's three health plans. These are only beginning to reach into the countryside, but Señor Cornejo suggested that the family-planning idea might be introduced into the Rural Community Development Program which includes 7,000 villages.

The education of the public is an important part of the work of the Fundación. A women's committee, composed of five Congresswomen and a woman Senator and headed by Guadalupe Rivera Marín (Diego Rivera's daughter), arranges for lectures throughout the country and is making contacts with unions. Various industrial firms are participating in the program. The Fundación's clinic in Monterrey receives 90 per cent of its financial support from industry, Señor Cornejo said.

He gives full and enthusiastic credit to the work of Dr. Edris Rice-Wray and the Asociación Pro-Salud Maternal,

"which has set us ahead of most other Latin American countries in preparing to tackle this crucial problem." The medical sub-director, Dr. Sergio Correu, is attached also to the Asociación where he is head of the training program.

Many Mexicans can of course be expected to oppose a program of population limitation on religious or nationalistic grounds, or from a sincere belief that science will find the way to increase productivity, or that a fairer distribution of wealth can be achieved. Those who work with the desperate poor may be too optimistic in their idea that the mass of the people will accept such a program with relief. In what seemed to me a sober estimate of the situation, Dr. Rice-Wray spoke as follows:

> Although there is separation between the state and religion since the Juarez Reform laws, it is an outward separation only. Catholicism is in the bone and blood of these people and it affects the manner of their thinking. If the Catholic Church takes a positive stand, action will come more quickly. If it doesn't, I believe that the government won't wait. The pressure being generated by the population growth grows stronger every day and the problem can be solved only by the government. I am sure that those in power are waiting only for an opportune moment when they won't risk a public reaction against a fertility control program. This moment of decision could come anytime.

A few weeks after she made this prediction, the government did indeed take a giant step forward. The Ford Foundation announced on October 18 that it had granted more than a half million dollars to three important Mexican government institutions for research into various aspects of population control, and for training of doctors, nurses and social workers. The largest of the three grants was given specifically for research in oral contraceptives. Since it obviously is impossible to study these matters without patients, many thousands of Mexicans who wish to control the size of their families will now be given the means to do so.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA

HUGH WESTON

Mr. Weston, an American, has for the past four years been minister of the Unitarian Church in Adelaide, Australia, and a lecturer on the educational programs of the Australian Broadcasting System.

Adelaide

Ever since the early white convicts and settlers in the 19th century got rid of the troublesome 300,000 aborigines by killing them off or starving them to death (today only about 40,000 "full-bloods" are left alive), Australians have with some justification considered their subcontinent a paradisiacal "island in the sun." They are fond of describing themselves as "content with our lot" (they often say this in contrasting themselves with Americans) and the favorite Australian expression is "She'll be right."

Aussies are proud to note that "beer and smokes" take first place in the family budget, ahead of new cars, television sets or washing machines. They are a bit ashamed that West Germany has slightly surpassed them in per capita beer consumption, but, perhaps as a result of their own achievements in this area, Australia holds an unchallenged first place in the number of traffic deaths per vehicle. Australians tell of the speaker in a public park who was asking: "What is an Australian? Just what is an Australian?" And a voice came in reply: "An Australian is a lazy boozer." All Australians present laughed knowingly.

Everything seems geared to make life easy in this sun-drenched subtropical land, where an annual rainfall of only 16 inches makes it the driest major land mass on the earth. Outdoor sports, practiced unflaggingly in the shadows of the palm trees, make Australia, in proportion to its population, the world's foremost nation of athletes. The country enforces compulsory arbitration of labor disputes, and the American unionist is always a bit shocked to find that *both* sides want it that way—strikes are a lot of hard work and cause too much nervous tension. Despite the law, there was a very fierce strike at the Mt. Isa Copper Mines last year, but Australians point out that the mines are American-owned, and that the strike leader, who defied most of the unions, was an American. Australians, we are told, would never behave like that, left to their own devices.

Australians cherish a myth of male dominance, and were astonished to learn, from a recent survey, that in the opinion of their children Australian women make a higher proportion of the decisions, even on matters of recreation and family budget, than do the notoriously assertive American women. In skillful rebuttal, Australian men argued that they do not feel dominated—they are, they say, just lazier than American men, and a good deal lazier than Australian women, and so they *force* their wives to make most of the decisions.

Sheltered in their subtropical paradise behind the protecting barriers of a "white Australia" policy, Australians have also been spared the tension of racial strife now perplexing large parts of the world. All polls and surveys indicate that "white Australia" is favored by the overwhelming majority, although certain modifications would be sought by the young. Only a very few hundred "non-Europeans" are admitted to more or less permanent residence each year and, at least until recently, Australia has been steadily getting whiter and whiter, as white immigrants to the number of 100,000 pour in every year.

But recently some disturbing clouds have appeared in this corner of the sunny sky. For one thing, the unaccommodating aborigines have stopped dying out and are beginning to increase—much in the manner of the "vanishing Americans," who refused to vanish. Early this September, there occurred in Adelaide the first civil rights demonstration ever staged by aborigines in Australia's history. Nearly 200 natives marched through the streets, demanding a voice in the running of the tribal reservations. Aborigines are not citizens, and in the Northern Territory they are, by law, paid minimum wages far below those set for whites. The white man's paradise is still well protected against alien breeds coming in from without, but what about this "enemy" within? To be fair in this matter, the attorney general of the state of South Australia (who has charge of aboriginal affairs) and many others are doing all in their power to help the cause of the aborigine—that is one reason why his numbers are beginning rapidly to increase. But aborigine is still spelled with a small a.

Culture often follows the trends of trade, and Japan is taking England's place, this year, for the first time, as the top customer for Australian goods. England is safe in second place for the moment, but the United States is third and coming up fast, while, of all people, the Chinese Communists rank among the top five. The decline of Britain as the once dominant trading partner has, supposedly, led to a loosening of ties with Great Britain, and the largest club on the campus at the University of Adelaide is the Republican Club, which wants to make a republic out of Australia.

With the emergence of Japan as Australia's best customer, and the concomitant growth of other Asian trade, there is increasing pressure to modify the "white Australia" barriers.

Something else that may eventually upset Australian tranquillity is the coming of the Americans. Wherever the British retreat these days, the Americans step in. American capital has become so dominant that Australians have taken to calling their country "the fifty-first state." Almost the entire motor car and tobacco industries are American held, and the excellent new national daily newspaper, *The Australian*, has published a survey indicating that perhaps a third of the biggest Australian enterprises are American controlled. American business methods are copied to the finest detail.

But the overwhelming majority of the immigrants still come from England. Although the American tourist, seeing the shiny, Yankee-style used-car lots, thinks America has taken over the place, down deep there is a basic British attitude that any American who lives here for several years cannot fail to note. Indeed, it is said to be more a 19th-century British attitude than one of the current century. No one more epitomized it than the former Prime Minister,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert Menzies, also now Lord Mayor of the Cinque Ports in Britain, who demanded, when the currency was changed to the decimal system, that if Australia dropped the sacred word, "pound," at least the monetary unit should be called the "Royal." This idea was received enthusiastically by the upper classes, but was too much for the younger people and lower-class Australians, who consider themselves American at least in business methods, so a gigantic protest movement succeeded in naming the new monetary unit the "dollar."

Old-fashioned British traditions are illustrated in the fact that the pubs have until recently closed at six o'clock (they are now to be permitted to stay open until ten). Even new British arrivals are amazed by the Victorian censorship. *Playboy* and similar magazines are banned. Conformity is carried to a point that bemuses even the British. I have been politely removed from the tennis court for not wearing proper tennis attire which, in Adelaide at least, must be all white from top to bottom. Women must wear a tennis dress, not tennis shorts. Yet, paradox, go to the beach, and the bikinis are so brief as to be almost symbolic! Is Australia puritan? Hardly. Even the very severe censorship is a matter of propriety rather than purity.

At every basic cultural point, the Australian remarks how similiar he is to the Americans, and at every point the seasoned American notes how similar he really is to the British. The British don't go to church; neither does the Australian. British school children wear uniforms to school; so do the Australian children. Many Australian schools, even public schools, segregate by sex. The pupils all stand to attention when the teacher enters the room. Learning is by drill, not by "new-fangled" Dewey-ite methods of letting the students creatively find their own interests, let alone by the Kilpatrick methods of seeking even to abolish discipline in the classroom. Dewey, Kilpatrick, Patri—they are not even taught to the students training to be teachers. Americans live by Freud as by the Bible; Australians pay no attention to either. The favorite psychologist hereabouts is a man named Eysenck, who wrote a book called *The Uses and Abuses of Psychology*, Freud falling into the latter category. The philosophy departments of all universities, like other departments, are staffed by Australian and British teachers, not Americans, and all philosophy in Australia is British logical analysis, not Continental existentialism or American process philosophies. I am invited to give a lecture to the Philosophy Club of the University of Adelaide shortly, and this will be, as far as I can learn, the first time in the history of any Australian university that an existentialist thinker has been asked to lecture.

But some will say: look how Australia supports American policy in Vietnam. Is this not an indication of pro-Americanism? The answer is that on any ideological basis it is not. The Australian attitude toward the war is entirely cynical. The polls show that about 70 per cent of the people support the American-Australian intervention in the Vietnamese civil war, but they do so because they feel that they could be hurt financially if they failed to support the United States. Also, they say that while America is probably wrong in this case, "we Australians have to support it, because some day, if a rampaging Indonesia, either Communist or even rightist, should endanger us, we would need the United States." Britain, they point out, is withdrawing from these parts. But the absence of any conviction is shown by the fact that the polls also indicate an overwhelming opposition to sending any except volunteers to Vietnam. A tiny few think Australia might be menaced by Communist aggression, but most are happily reaping profits from the growing China trade (down somewhat in 1965-66) and think the United States is quite mad, but "we have to support them, anyway."

Meanwhile, the sun shines, and the tennis players continue training. But the government has rammed through a tough conscription law despite overwhelming popular protest. If the Vietnamese War continues for many years, if the Asians keep clamoring for the right to enter Australia, and if the aborigines keep increasing, sunny Australia may be in for some storms.

THE MEDICARE BONANZA

SELIG GREENBERG

Mr. Greenberg is the author of The Troubled Calling: Crisis in the Medical Establishment *(Macmillan). He is the winner of two Lasker medical journalism awards.*

It is doubtful that any easy remedies will be suggested by the "very hard and very quick look" at climbing medical costs to be taken at President Johnson's direction by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Council of Economic Advisers and the Labor Department. More than anything else, this study is probably an attempt to forestall a threatened Congressional investigation of what many competent observers feel is HEW's excessive generosity in setting up—under medicare—payment schedules for hospitals and doctors. If so, the White House move is not apt to delay for long a legislative scrutiny of the reimbursement formulas and of some of the other factors responsible for the uncontrolled inflation in our health-care economy.

The threatened hospital bed shortages and other complications feared by top HEW officials have failed to materialize during the first few months of medicare's operation, and the jubilant word from Social Security Administration headquarters in Baltimore has been that all concerned are fully cooperating and the program is running smoothly. But the bills for services to medicare patients are just starting to come in, and in the light of what has lately been happening to hospital rates and doctors' fees, these bills are likely to be substantially higher than anticipated. A medicare program that costs materially more than estimates indicated will soon oblige the Administration and Congress to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make a painful choice between raising still further the steep schedule of social security withholding taxes or dipping deeper into general revenue.

The costs of medical services, and particularly of hospital care, have for several years been rising at a pace faster than the overall cost of living. But what causes particular concern in Washington, and has been given as the reason for Mr. Johnson's order, is the steady acceleration of this rise, which appears to be at least partly related to the advent of medicare.

The end, moreover, is not in sight, especially in the hospital sector. The average expense per patient day in the nation's short-term hospitals rose last year by a record 9 per cent to $44.48. But this rate of increase has already been exceeded so far this year under mounting pressure by nurses and other employees for higher pay; many hospitals have been forced to raise their room charges above the $50-a-day mark, excluding ancillary services. Dr. Edwin L. Crosby, executive vice president of the American Hospital Association, predicted recently that hospital costs will jump during next year by at least 20 and possibly 30 per cent. The average yearly increase since 1960 has been 7 per cent. Some authorities have been predicting hospital costs of $100 a day by 1975, but if the present trend continues, this prohibitive level may be reached by the end of the 1960s.

The effect on medicare is obvious. While no great rush of aged patients into hospitals developed when medicare went into effect last July 1, hospital admissions covered by the program are now estimated to run at about 100,000 a week, which is close to 20 per cent of all admissions. Furthermore, the demand is certain to rise. The program came in during the low-occupancy months, and pressure on hospital beds will grow with the approach of winter and with the inauguration on January 1 of the nursing home part of medicare, which requires that its beneficiaries receive at least three days of prior hospitalization.

The costs of physicians' services are also certain to exceed expectations. Doctors across the country have been boosting their charges in anticipation of the establishment of medicare fee schedules; there are reliable reports that in some places fees for the elderly have been hiked by as much as 300 per cent.

Some of the continued rise in medical costs is unavoidable, particularly in the hospital field. Hospitals have still to close the gap between their pay scales and those prevailing in industry. To keep up with scientific advances, they must also continue to recruit more and better-trained personnel and provide additional costly equipment.

But the medical profession and the voluntary hospital system have long neglected the economies as well as the improved services that could be effected through more rational organization of medical practice and coordination of hospital facilities. When it underwrote a substantial portion of the nation's health-care costs, the federal government had a unique chance to insist on the adoption of some of these measures. By failing to do so, or to establish controls on the components which make up the costs of health services, the medicare law itself and the administrative regulations promulgated by HEW tend to freeze into the existing structure all the inefficiencies of the medical profession. The price of this omission may be high, not only in the threat it poses to the fiscal integrity of the medicare program itself but in its effects on our entire medical economy.

Some of medicare's original backers have become increasingly disenchanted with the program for two main reasons: the benefits are so enmeshed in limitations, deductibles and co-pay provisions that they cover only about half of the average medical costs of the aged; and the law and its implementation by HEW have, in effect, given the medical profession and the hospitals an administrative hammer lock on the program.

The eagerness of those who framed the medicare act to avoid a confrontation with the medical profession has created many openings for domination by physicians. The law establishes all-medical or mixed medical-lay advisory committees in several key areas of decision making, such as the approval of participating hospitals, the definition of reasonable charges and the review of hospital utilization. The statute requires HEW to consult associations representing physicians and hospitals and to administer the medicare program through existing insurance carriers which are vested with considerable latitude.

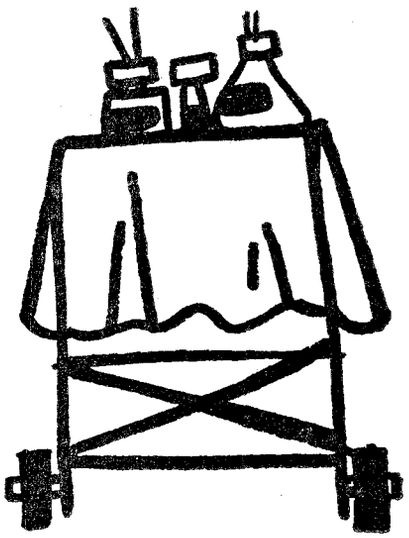
In most places Blue Cross and Blue Shield have been designated as administrative agents for medicare. Many Blue Cross plans are still dominated by hospital representatives. Blue Shield, which is playing a crucial role in determining the level of doctors' charges under medicare, is almost completely controlled by the medical profession. To some extent, at any rate, the doctors have thus been negotiating with themselves in setting the medicare fee schedule.

The medicare law specifically forbids the government from making any attempt to regulate the quality of medical care. This prohibition, and the Johnson Administration's predilection for trying to achieve a consensus by pleasing everybody, appear to mean that the government will merely underwrite the manner in which hospitals and doctors now operate, and that the only change will be in the way they are paid. The trouble with the policy of consensus in the health-care field is that while the doctors and the hospitals are tightly organized and represented by vigorous lobbyists, there are no effective spokesmen for the sick and aged.

The reimbursement formula gives hospitals about everything they had asked for. It guarantees payment of costs, plus allowances for depreciation and an additional 2 per cent for improvement of services. This arrangement has all the defects of cost-plus contracts and encourages the removal of all restraint on costs. Except for providing staff utilization committees to cut down excessively long stays, neither the medicare law nor the reimbursement formula imposes any controls on hospital expenditures. There are no provisions for eliminating duplicated plant and equipment, for more precise tailoring of facilities and services to the needs of patients, or for the development of less costly alternative services. The hospitals are guaranteed payment upon showing that they have spent the money; it makes no difference that they may have wasted it.

Much the same situation prevails with doctors' fees. Under the regulations, physicians must be paid "reasonable charges" for treating medicare patients. The criteria to be considered, the Social Security Administration has ruled, are "the customary charges for similar services generally made by the physician and the prevailing charges in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



locality for similar services." Here again the level of charges is, in substance, left up to the doctors themselves, and the conditions under which they work, which are often a cause of unnecessarily high costs, are left untouched.

At the height of the controversy over the medicare legislation the American Medical Association proposed an expanded voluntary health insurance program for the aged and said that its members stood ready to charge elderly patients less than the prevailing fees. But it now develops that in my own state of Rhode Island, for instance, doctors are allowed under the medicare formula to charge more for surgical services to medicare patients than they are charging low-income patients who are Blue Shield subscribers. Under Blue Shield, participating surgeons, assistant surgeons and anesthetists agree to accept the insurance program's fee schedule, which is below the customary charges, for patients falling within certain income limits. These limits are $2,800 for single persons and $4,000 for a family under Blue Shield Plan A, and $4,000 for a single person and $6,000 for a family under Plan B. But although the great majority of the aged fall within these limits, the patient's income is not a factor under medicare regulations, and doctors are allowed to bill at their full private-practice rates.

Social Security regulations provide two methods of paying doctors for treating medicare patients and leave it up to the physicians to pick the one they prefer. Under the direct-billing method, the patient pays the doctor and is then reimbursed for 80 per cent of established "reasonable charges." This permits the doctor to charge whatever he wants. The alternative is the assignment method, whereby the physician collects the allowable benefits on the basis of "reasonable charges" from the medicare fiscal agent, Blue Shield in most cases.

The government's definition of "reasonable charges" assures doctors of receiving their customary fees for patients whom they formerly treated free or at reduced rates. Nevertheless, at the AMA's convention a few days before medicare went into effect, the House of Delegates brushed aside the more moderate advice of its retiring and incoming presidents and adopted a resolution recommending that doctors charge their medicare patients directly. Behind the gobbledygook that direct billing preserves "individual responsibility" on the part of the patient and protects the doctor-patient relationship is the profession's desire to have its cake and eat it. It wants to collect from former charity patients while at the same time continuing its Robin Hood method of charging more affluent clients still fatter fees.

Among the most outspoken critics of HEW's generosity toward the hospitals have been Senators Russell B. Long of Louisiana, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico, another key member of that committee and one of the earliest advocates of medicare. Both Senators have objected to the allowances for depreciation of hospital buildings and equipment and for improvement of services, and Senator Anderson has drafted a bill which would give control of such funds to federally aided state planning agencies which would be charged with preventing their use for unnecessary duplication of plant and equipment. Senator Long threatens to inject an investigation of drug prices into the consideration of medicare costs. His aim is to require greater use by hospitals of drugs sold by their scientific or generic names rather than by advertised brand names. Legislation to that effect is pending in the Senate.

Congress is reported reluctant to start tinkering with the new medicare law at the current session, but high medicare costs and the need for tighter controls on the providers of services are likely to become the subject of heated debate at the next session.

Profit is not a major issue in medicare's relations with the voluntary short-term hospitals, the great majority of which are nonprofit institutions. With them, the trouble arises from traditions of autonomy, the ambitions of trustees and medical staffs, and a dislike of outside controls. But 80 per cent of nursing homes are run to make money, and profit is already complicating HEW's negotiations for the medicare nursing home benefits that start next year.

The government has offered nursing home proprietors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the same reimbursement formula of 2 per cent above costs that hospitals are getting, with the additional proviso that payments cannot exceed a return of 4¾ per cent on investment. The representatives of nursing home associations have rejected this offer as inadequate and are now dickering for more.

Despite protests of the operators that they stand to lose money under the proffered formula, a boom is developing in the construction of such homes, and private investing groups are forming all over the country to back ventures in this field. The trend is toward chain operations, which hold out the promise of big savings on volume purchases and centralized controls.

A most ambitious enterprise for building nursing homes and operating them on a franchise basis has been launched by Medicenters of America, a Tennessee corporation backed by the principal owners of the Holiday Inn motel chain. Within less than a year of operations, the corporation has received applications for franchises from fifty-five persons or groups. Its first offering of 150,000 shares at $10 was snapped up a few months ago, and shortly thereafter the stock was selling for $16.

Two major difficulties which medicare will face when it initiates nursing home benefits are the shortage of such facilities and the fact that a sizable proportion of those now operating are expected to fail the program's standards. The principal requirements are that a nursing home have an agreement with at least one hospital participating in the medicare program for the transfer of patients and their medical records; that it have at least one registered nurse employed full time, and adequate nursing services around the clock; that it have a doctor always available for emergencies and that each patient be under a physician's supervision; that it keep medical records for all patients and have appropriate rules for dispensing drugs, and that it maintain a review committee with physician participation to make sure that patients are not admitted unnecessarily and do not stay longer than necessary.

Competent opinion is that the government will be forced to suspend some of these rules in order to meet the demand for convalescent care. But overshadowing this immediate problem is the key question of whether an important segment of health care should be entrusted to facilities operated for profit.

LETTERS *(continued from page 498)*

There is some ambiguity in this writing—unusual in a professional like Swados—but he seems to be saying that such character assassination has been the main contribution of the two men he names. If this is what he means he should say so more clearly; if it is what he means he is a vicious slanderer and an ignoramus. If it is not what he means, what did he mean and whom did he have in mind? *Herbert Aptheker*

Valley Cottage, N. Y.

DEAR SIRS: The last time I contributed a piece to *The Nation* I was rewarded by being classified as a pro-Communist "rogue" by the organ of the Socialist Labor Party. Now I am classified as "a vicious slanderer and an ignoramus" by Dr. Aptheker—conditional, however, on my assuring him that I did not intend to refer to him as one "whose contributions to socialism have consisted primarily in character assassination." I am happy to assure him that such was not my intention, that in fact I intended to *contrast*—as should be quite clear to any reader with a good conscience—Dr. Aptheker's scholarly attainment as one who has "something to contribute" with those whose lack of such attainment is coupled with venomous hatred for those Socialists with whom they disagree. As for identifying the character assassins, the paragraphs immediately preceding that to which Dr. Aptheker takes exception reported on their behavior, e.g., speaking of Isaac Deutscher as a Birchite. If Dr. Aptheker cannot bring himself to believe that such behavior has been characteristic of many Communists for the last forty years, I shall be happy to refer him to the appropriate citations from the files of the *Daily Worker*. . . . *Harvey Swados*

new stage for man

Lynn, Mass.

DEAR SIRS: Isaac Deutscher said in his address on "Socialist Man" to the Second Annual Socialist Scholars Conference that the founders of *presently existing* "scientific Socialist" ideology, Marx, Engels, and Lenin, laid no blueprint for the future "Socialist man." To do so before a Socialist society existed seemed premature, utopian, and thus wrong to them. As you pointed out [*The Nation*, Oct. 3] the Chinese revolution is now preoccupied with and heavily committed to the construction of the "new man."

This indicates clearly that the guiding ideology of the Chinese revolution is going far beyond *pre-existing* Marxist-Leninist ideology. It seems that the first great impetus of modern Communist ideology came from Marx and Engels in the 1860s and 1870s. Then the next great input of ideological energy came from Lenin in the 'teens of the present century, about fifty years later. Another fifty years has now passed. *Is the stage now set and prepared for another great surge of ideological energy?* *Bernard Edwin Galitz*

at least a start

Cambridge, Mass.

DEAR SIRS: I-Kua Chou's article on Communist China ["Between Goals and Dogma," *The Nation*, Oct. 3] presents an astute analysis of Peking's world view. . . . Normally statements of joint intent to settle disputes peacefully can even be harmful as they gloss over basic differences and allow nations to falsely believe peace is achieved, as witness the Kellogg-Briand Pact. However, here such a declaration has merit as it would mark a successful negotiation with Peking. Each nation believing that tensions have been reduced might find it profitable to institutionalize its communications with the other. *Mark Ginsburg*

Nation file offered

DEAR SIRS: I have an almost complete file of *The Nation* from mid-1960 to the present, which I want to dispose of. If a library or any of your individual readers would like them, please let me know.

Robert I. Cammer
4109 Pine Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS

The American Outsider

PAUL ZWEIG
Mr. Zweig is a poet who teaches at Columbia University.

Poetry in America has long been a dangerous enterprise, for those poets, at least, like Whitman, Hart Crane or Theodore Roethke, who needed to follow their imagination into whatever hard country it would lead them. Such poets have seemed often to be clumsy explorers, paying a great price for every scrap of poetic certainty they managed to secure. Their work, as well as their lives, have had a curiously unfinished aspect, as if the effort of discovery had allowed them no time to smooth over their awkwardness and hesitation of first encounters. Because they have been, to all appearances, only half-skillful, they have been called the "low-brows" of American poetry, the "whisky-priests."

Critics have in fact always recognized two kinds of pleasure which the poet may take with his language. There is first the elaborate, almost playful skill with words; the love of their plasticity, and pride at mastering the complicated rhythms one can impose on them. But there is also the second, more unruly pleasure: the poet's surprise at the unnamed shapes he has entangled in his net, the dark language, the unmanageable love he dredges up from that part of his experience where opposites coincide, and where his word and some higher Word may be the same; that strangely "impersonal" mood, of which Lorca wrote:

> *They come to me, my essential things.*
> *They are refrains of refrains.*
> *Here in the reeds of the late afternoon*
> *How strange to be named Federico.*

In England and America, it is the first of these pleasures that has, on the whole, won out. The joy of great rhetoric has always stood close to the center of our poetic traditions; verbal skill like Milton's or Tennyson's, like Eliot's, Pound's or Stevens' has been, like frock coat and tails, a ticket into all the best homes. This has given rise to a poetry of argument, in which the skill with words is not unlike a lawyer's skill which marshals evidence, weighs emotional appeal, plots distinctions that unfold toward a crisp, final point which can no longer be refuted. The other poets, the "children of nature," like Blake or Whitman, fought so hard against the frock coat and tails that in the end they were locked outside the gates, imprisoned among the shapes of their imagination.

Van Wyck Brooks's distinction between low-brow and high-brow in America makes roughly the same point as earlier distinctions between Yankee and Englishman, New York and New England, East and West; but it also seems to cover this curious dissociation between the pleasures of rhetoric and the pleasures of discovery, which has made our poetic traditions in England and America so different from those of France, Germany or Spain. The "low-brows," the half-respectable wanderers, the visionaries, have also been the most "American" of our poets; they have chosen not to appeal to Europe or to the Academy, and have paid for their isolation—Crane with his life, Whitman and Roethke with their "respectability," and the recognition they never really obtained while alive.

During the past half dozen years, however, as the New Criticism has loosened its paralyzing hold, and the overdone "skills" of our poetry in the 1940s and '50s have begun to appear as faded as they, in fact, always were, a new mood has crept into the world of American poetry. Active and gifted poets have discovered a need to forsake the pleasures of rhetoric, or at least to allow their formal skills to be shaped by the wayward pressures of an imagination which has led them, as it did the surrealists, to recompose the very elements of their experience. Thus James Dickey can write, with the simplicity of vision: "My green, graceful bones fill the air/ With sleeping birds"; and John Logan can describe a death, as "His soft old flesh slipped/ Inside its great/ Trunk with a sound he held/ Too long inside his skull."

A thread of continuity in this changing mood has been Robert Bly's erratic, single-handed experiment with the Sixties Press, and with the controversial magazine he has published since 1958, *The Sixties* (formerly *The Fifties*). For more than half a dozen years, Bly has explored the impact and the delicacy of that transfiguration which may happen in language, and which has always been the concern of poets like Rimbaud and Baudelaire in France, Rilke and Trakl in Germany, and many Spanish poets.

From his farm in western Minnesota, Bly has kept up a steady stream of translations, articles, poems and criticism which have filled eight issues of *The Sixties* magazine, and a variety of books under the head of the Sixties Press. Although neither the books nor the magazine are distributed on the same professional scale as the sleek literary quarterlies, they have gained a large audience among poets and students, and have had an influence far beyond the numbers distributed. From the first, the Sixties Press has been a labor of artisans, with Bly himself taking charge of all stages of production, excluding the actual printing. He and several friends have done the selection, the writing, the translating, the book designing; and his wife has been in charge of distribution to subscribers and booksellers.

Robert Bly's work has been as much a symptom as a cause. Among the poets of his generation who were but uneasily rooted in the poetic mood of the 1950s, men like Louis Simpson, James Dickey, Galway Kinnell, James Wright and Donald Hall, responded to Bly's formulations. Their own need for a renewed lyricism, and their own experiments with imagery were confirmed by the articles and translations which appeared in the magazine. The effect was to open an exchange of ideas and influences between these and other poets, who remain, nevertheless, so different from one another. The bond between them, which has been catalyzed by the Sixties Press, has been less one of mutual influence than of a common resistance to the orthodoxies of American poetry since the Second World War.

Bly's effort with the press has been a double-pronged one. On the one hand, it has sought to make available to Americans, in good English translations, the work of some great European and South American writers, poets whose imagination reaches down again and again into its own depths to bring up landscapes of self-exploration. As Bly himself has written:

> The fundamental world of poetry . . . is the inward world. The poem expresses what we are just beginning to think, thoughts we have not yet thought. The poem must catch these thoughts alive, holding them in language that is also alive, flexible and animal-like as they.

To date, volumes on Georg Trakl, Blas

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

de Otero and Cesar Vallejo have appeared, while others on Pablo Neruda, Jiminez and Rilke are still in preparation. In pursuing this program of translation, Bly has tried to knit up the loose ends of a paradox which has so painfully isolated the American poets of the "Whitman tradition," who have wandered for so long at the edge of the well-dressed world of "literature." In a note, introducing the *Twenty Poems of Georg Trakl*, James Wright says:

> We are used to reading poems whose rules of traditional construction we can memorize and quickly apply. Trakl's poems, on the other hand, though they are shaped with the most beautiful delicacy and care, are molded from within. He did not write according to any rules of construction, traditional or otherwise, but rather waited patiently and silently for the worlds of his poems to reveal their own natural laws. The result, in my experience at least, is a poetry from which all shrillness and clutter have been banished.

How closely this resembles Whitman, and his attempt to blend into a single lifelong effort the art of words, and a spiritual attentiveness to those "natural" laws that governed their use, as he tells us in his famous preface to the *Leaves of Grass*: "The rhyme and uniformity of perfect poems show the free growth of metrical laws and bud from them as unerringly and loosely as lilacs or roses on a bush, and take shapes as compact as the shapes of chestnuts and oranges and melons and pears, and shed the perfume impalpable to form."

In issue after issue of his magazine, Bly has argued for a new sense of the imagination; a use, in particular, of that kind of poetic energy which is entirely self-expressive as it reinvents the objects of the world, and transforms them into imagery: not "pictures," or descriptions, but a layer of invented figures which have a root in the unconscious, and a blossoming in the clearly seen, delicately loved objects of the world. Not Pound's "petals on a wet black bough," writes Bly, but Yves Bonnefoy's "An interior sea lighted by turning eagles." That is an image.

Behind the Sixties Press is a desire to test the limits of our American poetic traditions; to weed out the dry exercises which have often, in the past twenty years, passed for poetry, simply because they followed a scheme of imagination familiar to all. This has led Bly to half-provocative gestures, like the recent publication of a volume entitled *The Sea and the Honeycomb*, containing a collection of four-line poems, drawn from the most varied sources. Because the pleasures of argument have always been uppermost in the English and American traditions, Bly writes, poets have tended to neglect a range of emotional material that moves in and out of their lives too rapidly to allow a hold for argument and elaboration. "The strength of a new form," he writes in his introduction, "is that it makes both poet and reader aware of feelings they'd hardly noticed before." The short poem, never a true member of our arsenal of forms, can do just that; it can extend the life of the intelligence into poetry in a way we have rarely tried before:

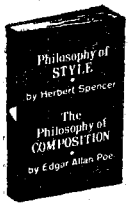
> The poet who succeeds in writing short poems is like a man who has found his way through a stone wall into a valley miles long where he lives. He walks back up the valley, and opens a door in the wall for an instant to show you where the entrance is. . . . Those who expect the poet to give them ideas see only a vague movement on the side of the mountain. Before they have turned around to face the poem, the door is closed.

The second prong of Bly's effort has been in the direction of literary criticism. He has written many articles whose aim has been to disengage the kernel of imaginative insight a poem may contain, although it may be obscured by an accumulation of rhetorical devices and half-thought-out literary effects. Every issue of *The Sixties* has contained, so far, a long essay signed by Crunk (usually Bly himself) on a young American poet whose work Bly feels touches in some way on the live energies of discovery. To date, essays have appeared on John Logan, James Wright, W. S. Merwin, Gary Snider, Louis Simpson, Donald Hall; others have been announced on Denise Levertov and William Stafford. In addition, the Press has published a volume of criticism by James Dickey, entitled *The Suspect in Poetry*, in which Dickey gracefully though bitterly dismembers much of what has been written in America in the past fifteen years. Dickey has a fine critical verve, and his volume is indeed hygienic for the cluttered "literary" mind. It is a pity, however, that those few poets Dickey admires rarely awaken his response as entirely as do those he "destroys" with such intelligence.

The whole idea defended by the Sixties Press (one which has given rise to such great poetry outside our country) depends on a sense of moral engagement of which poetry is only the purest expression in language. Whitman wrote in his preface: "The fluency and ornaments of the finest poems . . . are not independent but dependent. All beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain."

Thus from this point of view, the effort of poetry becomes a kind of moral alchemy; to make great words, Whitman wrote, we must make ourselves. It is not accidental, therefore, that the most recent book distributed by the Sixties Press is entitled *A Poetry Reading Against The War In Vietnam*, edited by Bly and David Ray. It has been too easy for poets in America to consecrate a divorce between poetry and politics, which is usually justified by pointing to all the bad political poetry that has been written. Neruda, in particular, has been accused of selling out his imaginative genius by writing mediocre political verse, but one must not forget that some of Neruda's political poems are as great as anything he has written. In the past year much very ordinary poetry has been published expressing the almost visceral shock of the war in Vietnam. But some of these poems are very moving. What's more, others will be written, as the language of war and ideology and political conflict is transformed into that powerful language of tragedy and emotion out of which great political poetry must come.

The Sixties Press has shown, on the



FOR WRITERS!

Enrich your style through Herbert Spencer's and Edgar Allan Poe's classic principles that have influenced many of the world's great authors. A help for writers eager to get published. Send $1.00 to

PAGEANT PRESS
101 5th Ave., N.Y. 3. Dept. N

COMMENTARY, WORLD'S BEST MAGAZINE?

SEE FOR YOURSELF
☐ 7 Mo. Trial $4.79
☐ 12 Mo. $8.00

COMMENTARY, NA
165 East 56 St., NY, NY
☐ Bill me.
☐ Check enclosed.
Name.....
Address.....
Zip.....
Outside USA + $1/yr.

$2.95 each

SAVE YOUR COPIES OF

(YOUR PUBLICATION)

- Each file holds a full year's copies.
- Jesse Jones Volume Files for every publication.
- Covered in durable leather like Kivar, title embossed in 16 Kt gold.

Satisfaction guaranteed

Attractive and practical for your home or office

3 for $8.25

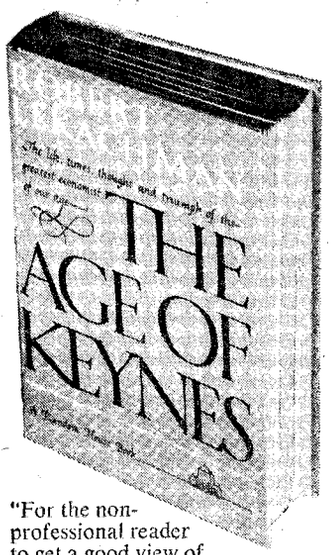
ORDER NOW — send check or money order.

MAGAZINE FILE CO.
520 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 36, N. Y.

FREE DESCRIPTIVE FOLDER UPON REQUEST

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whole, the peculiar strengths and weaknesses of a very American enterprise. With an almost quixotic energy, Bly has single-handedly turned out issue after issue of his magazine, in addition to more than half a dozen books, with more to come. He has translated, or seen to translations, from languages he has scarcely known. He has thought out the problems of his argument in the widest terms; though from a dryly scholarly point of view his information on literary history can turn out, at times, to be somewhat fanciful. This has led to errors, some misstatements, occasional wrong-headed translations—I am thinking, in particular, of the French issue of *The Sixties*—which have been held against his whole enterprise by many who have been offended anyway by the overturned idols. His magazine has veered in the most unexpected ways, and often within a single issue, from serious and carefully argued statements, to rambunctious satire, and at times unreasonable polemics. Yet, in the end, the weaknesses of the Sixties Press are only the reverse side of its strengths. Both bear the mark of the right- and wrong-headed activist who, like Whitman in the preface and *Democratic Vistas,* has discovered that the only way he could think was to think for himself.



"For the non-professional reader to get a good view of John Maynard Keynes and his ideas has not been easy . . . For this reason, this book will be greatly welcomed."
—JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH, front page, *N.Y. Times Book Review*

"Lekachman does three things and does them well. First, he presents an interesting biography of John Maynard Keynes, one of the few scholars who led an interesting life. Second, he explains, in terms that any intelligent reader can understand, the essence of Lord Keynes' scientific contribution to modern economics. Third, he provides an instructive and useful survey of the economic problems facing America in the postwar period." —PAUL SAMUELSON, *Book Week*

THE AGE OF KEYNES
By ROBERT LEKACHMAN
Chairman, Dept. of Economics, State Univ. of N.Y. (Stony Brook)
$6.00, now at your bookstore
RANDOM HOUSE

Austrian Empire World

THE WATERFALLS OF SLUNJ. *By Heimito von Doderer. Translated by Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser. Harcourt, Brace & World. 375 pp. $6.95.*

MICHAEL HAMBURGER

Mr. Hamburger, poet, critic and translator of German poetry, has published many books here and in England, including Modern German Poetry *(Grove Press) and* Günter Grass: Selected Poems *(Harcourt, Brace). He is currently Purington Lecturer at Mt. Holyoke College.*

Heimito von Doderer, who celebrated his 70th birthday this year, was introduced to American readers in 1961 with the publication of his longest and weightiest novel, *The Demons.* Even before the German publication of this *magnum opus,* preceded in 1951 by *Die Strudlhofstiege,* an only slightly shorter novel quite as remarkable as the other and closely related to it in setting and theme, Doderer was one of the very few living Austrian novelists of a stature comparable to that of Musil and Broch. No English translation of *Die Strudlhofstiege* has yet appeared. *The Demons* was followed here by an earlier and less ambitious novel, *Every Man a Murderer,* originally published in 1938.

The Waterfalls of Slunj, Doderer's latest novel, is the first part of a projected tetralogy. It is complete in itself, but the four parts together promise to be as large in scope and scale as *The Demons.* Unlike *Die Strudlhofstiege* and the *The Demons, The Waterfalls of Slunj* reaches back in time to the 1880s. Like them, it is a "total novel," designed to render and interpret a whole society, a whole way of life, a whole geographical area; that covered by the Austrian Empire; and something more, in this case, since several of the principal characters are English, and the "world" of this novel is an Anglo-Austrian one.

Doderer is also an eminent historian; and whether he deals with recent events or with past centuries, he combines the historian's concerns with the novelist's. Yet he does not produce the totality of his novels in a synthetic way, by creating characters who are embodiments of ideas or tendencies. Here he differs radically from Thomas Mann, whose long novels might otherwise present an analogous totality. Doderer, who regards ideologies as the root of all evil in the modern world, subordinates ideas to another totality, that of an individual's perceptions and memories. In that he is closer to Proust than to Mann. The naturalistic breadth of his novels is inseparable from his psychological range —by which I mean the range of his sympathies and empathies—and this range is greater than either Mann's or Proust's. He excels at the portrayal of characters who are neither sophisticated nor highly articulate. Doderer knows that their inner life is intense, rich and interesting; also, that it is threatened by disturbances and obsessions akin to those of intellectuals, but exacerbated by the incapacity of the semi-articulate, the semi-aware, to understand their own thoughts and feelings. Mann's Hans Castorp was a character of this kind; but Mann could sustain his own interest in such a character only by overlaying Castorp's experiences with a superstructure of general, symbolic or exemplary implications. Doderer's engineers, executives and businessmen may be "dumb oxen," but their sensibilities are rendered without patronage or caricature.

One instance of this in *The Waterfalls of Slunj* is the dilemma of the younger Clayton, Donald, whose failures and frustrations culminate in his premature death by the waterfalls. This dilemma is not analyzed and explained, as it would be in a novel by Thomas Mann, but enacted in terms of the character's own experience and sensibility. Donald Clayton's failure as a lover becomes part of a complex that includes all his other failures; yet, in Doderer, such complexes are not traced to a single cause, which must invariably be sexual. The contrast between Robert and Donald Clayton crystallizes in two seemingly trivial incidents, both involving crayfish, the fascination of these animals for the two men, and the very different responses to this fascination of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Harriet and Monica. A related key incident is that in which Clayton's business associate, Chwostik, returns to the toy train set with which he had not played since his childhood; and another is that in which the schoolboy Zdenko is carried over from his experiment with electricity to an experiment with his friend's beautiful and electric mother. Like the waterfalls at Slunj, the scene of Robert's honeymoon and Donald's death, these incidents have a unifying function in the novel, without being blatantly symbolic.

Doderer's historical breadth and stylistic decorum make him a traditionalist among contemporary novelists. His originality, though indisputable, is discreet; and his experiments are conducted not in the reader's presence but in private, before and after the writing of his final drafts. His power to re-create environments and evoke their scenery, whether urban or rural, is self-evident, and scarcely surpassed by any other living novelist. Yet all the realistic detail also serves to enlarge our experience and sharpen our self-knowledge. The interaction between character and environment has been beautifully rendered in the English version by the Kaisers, who are also translators of Musil's works.

Death in the Schools

OUR CHILDREN ARE DYING. *By Nat Hentoff. Viking Press. 141 pp. $4.50.*

MAURICE R. BERUBE
Mr. Berube is assistant editor of The United Teacher. *His reviews and articles have appeared in* The Nation, The New Leader, Commonweal *and* New Politics.

Nothing so emphasizes the cruel disparity between the rhetoric and the reality of American life as the failure to educate the urban Negro poor. George Bernard Shaw expressed our national scandal in a famous indictment of the racial guilt of America: We turn Negroes into bootblacks and then claim the Negro is inferior because he is a bootblack. We add to the initial handicap of racial poverty, *de facto* segregated schools, badly trained teachers and deteriorating learning conditions. For the first time in our national history the school, instead of affording the means to transcend the ghetto slum, has become itself an oppressive force.

There is a growing literature documenting our failures. Nat Hentoff presents us with a fresh and valuable treatment in his expanded *New Yorker* profile of Dr. Elliott Shapiro, former principal of P.S. 119 in Harlem: a radical educator dedicated to the idea that compassion is an integral part of education in the slums.

Let it be said immediately of this admiring portrait that Hentoff does not shrink from challenging the assumption: is compassion enough? "But there's still something wrong there," Hentoff honestly elicits from a Shapiro admirer. "Those kids are not scoring as high as they should in the tests. It may be that all the understanding they get in that school, while it does help them develop a better self-image, doesn't help them to achieve. . . . Are his kids going to have enough competitive drive to do more than survive?" That, of course, is the heart of the matter.

Nat Hentoff intended this revised version as a microcosm of the educational macrocosm in Northern ghettos—a "book about some of these children" which is "relevant to all schools." However, the figure of Shapiro looms so large—even when he is not on stage—that nearly everyone and everything else seem to be props in the cult of Shapiro's personality. Perhaps this was conditioned by the needs of the profile genre of *New Yorker* journalism. But in rereading this book version, one becomes aware that the concentration on Shapiro creates an unnatural tilt separating him from his intricate milieu. Where one feels that the pupils and the environment should dominate, it is the father figure of Shapiro, his "life work and life style," that prevail.

For what we have here is the portrait of an extraordinary man in extraordinary circumstances, among quite ordinary peers (there are only two living legends in the New York City educational establishment among nearly 900 principals, Shapiro and the radical pacifist integrationist, Dr. Edward Gottlieb). Shapiro is a practicing psychoanalyst specializing in the young, a former teacher-union organizer, an adept administrator whose unique school encourages experiments and initiative, a visionary who believes that the schools' task is to alter the very fabric of society, a beloved figure in the black community ("You ain't just the principal of the school," one man tells him, "you're the principal of this neighborhood"), and a believer in direct action. (His mobilization of the parents and teachers around the drive for a new school is remembered in the now famous "rat incident." A newspaper advertisement brought dignitaries and television cameras to the old school. While the cameras were rolling and a horrified Mayor of New York watched, Shapiro chased a rat around the auditorium, swatting it with a broom. If Shapiro had staged it, the happening could not have been more effective. Of course, he got his new school.)

He is, then, an exceptional man. But as one educator put it, you can't build systems on Elliott Shapiros. But Shapiro's efforts for the children (who in his phrase

I DON'T MIND

I Carolyn Jackson am a pure-blooded Negro in soul and mind.
My mother's from North Carolina and my father's from Florida.
I know when I go to that old wooden bed,
Somewhere on the other side of town, there is a child being
put to bed in a soft cuddly nest.
But being a Negro isn't so bad (if you know what's going on)
Down South my cousin is being beat up—
And Look There . . . My aunt got put in jail for drinking from
a white fountain.
But here I feel better because I have more freedom.
When I ride the train and sit next to a person of the
opposite race
I feel like a crow in a robin's nest
And I feel dirty.
I'm not prejudiced or anything . . .
If we go on a trip and they call me names,
I Don't Mind.

CAROLYN JACKSON
(Age 11, United States)

From *Miracles,* Poems by children of the English-speaking world. Collected by Richard Lewis. Simon & Schuster. 214 pp. $4.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"are dying" because they fail to read and achieve) *has* effect: in the twelve years while he has been principal of the school, dismal statistics of the failure of 99 per cent of the children have been slashed to two-thirds.

And in Shapiro's special handling of a violent pupil, John, over the protests of his teaching staff that his method sacrificed the welfare of other children for just one, we have the distillation of what is best in education. For without concern over a John, the one among the many, the schools lose an integral part of their humanity.

Nat Hentoff not only knows which questions to ask, he sees the right things. Here are the many faces of poverty. The brilliant boy who reads twice his grade level, appropriated by various "families," is haunted by an attachment to the dead quasi-prostitute who assumed the role of his mother; they had often been seen "hanging on to each other, almost crying on each other." And there is the terrible world weariness of slum children exemplified by the pupil watching a fire who announced in a matter-of-fact tone to her excited teacher: "That's my house that's burning."

And beyond compassion, it is Shapiro's prescription for change which Hentoff finds relevant. Cut against the grain of conventional educational wisdom, his ideas, some dated, are an amalgam of progressive education, together with radical politics.

He proposes drastically reduced class sizes, and drastically increased educational services; but he does not stop here. Shapiro hopes that the schools will become real catalysts for social change in the community. "Suppose, for example, in a social science lesson, the teacher is talking about this being a democratic society," Shapiro tells Hentoff. "And a kid says, 'Teach, we have no heat at home. What do we do in this democratic society to get heat?' If the teacher doesn't formulate some plan in which the children can participate—picketing or other ways that might change the situation—the children won't buy the lesson." For Shapiro the world as a classroom is no euphemistic phrase.

Both subject and author are very special representatives of their breeds. The white compassionate radical educator in the ghetto school may one day be replaced by a more driving Negro counterpart. And creative journalists like Hentoff may give way to the specialized reporter. But should this come to pass, our lives will be less richly textured.

Reducing Kids to Dust

THEY CLOSED THEIR SCHOOLS: Prince Edward County, Virginia, 1951-1964. *By Bob Smith. University of North Carolina Press. 281 pp. $5.95.*

KENNELL JACKSON, Jr.
Mr. Jackson, a native of Prince Edward County, is currently a Foreign Areas Program Fellow and a doctoral candidate in history at the University of California (Los Angeles).

Benevolence and despotism are the most prominent, most contradictory features of the Southern political mind, indicating that an oppressive white elite can lay claim to impressive ideals and poetic vision, while courting intellectual impoverishment and truculence. Of this, Alexis de Tocqueville ventured a shrewd explanation: "In the South, the master is not afraid to raise his slave to his own standing, because he knows that he can in a moment reduce him to the dust, at pleasure."

At this moment, with an increasing number of interventionists in the South's affairs, Tocqueville's judgment is simply wrong. Media of conscience, the organs of news and law, harass and embarrass the Master, and have made a more hidden delight of his sport. If, however, we shift Tocqueville's description to an earlier period in the civil rights movement—when national indifference and inept leadership were more the rule—it is found to be uncannily true. Prince Edward County, Va., between 1959 and 1964, when the county's whites closed the entire public school system rather than integrate, is just one case that bears out his description.

The history of race relations in Prince Edward County had been distinguished by its reasonableness toward Negroes. There is no record of violent harassment or lynching, even when such events were widespread in other parts of the South. There appears to have been no systematic exclusion of Negroes from the voting rolls or gerrymandering of election districts within the county. While surrounding Virginia counties showed a marked tendency toward Negro migration to the cities, no exodus took place from Prince Edward County until the early 1960s. In 1961, there was a greater percentage of Negro landholders in the county than in any other rural area of the state. Finally, after the Second World War, a class of well-educated professionals, coming from

(Advertisement)

It is not entirely clear to us that a scholarly journal should be buying an ad in a commercial (albeit not *very* commercial) magazine, but the *Nation* said such very good things about us recently (in its Sept. 26 number) that it occurs to us that perhaps our writers deserve a wider hearing.

MASJ exists to keep American Studies people briefed on the best new thinking about US culture. We cover literature, art, history and the social sciences. Our contributors are specialists, engaged in active research. They write for us when they have something to say which transcends their own fields. When, for instance, the American historian has something to say which he feels the literary critic or sociologist should know about, he writes not for a history journal, but for us. Recently, a clutch of anthropologists gave the rest of us an eye-opening on what they now know about the American Indian (that was the issue the Nation praised).

So, though we're a scholar's magazine, university-sponsored, non-profit, small in circulation and inexpensively (but handsomely!) printed, what we print may well be what you want if you're actively interested in American history, literature, society, culture.

By way of comparison: we're rather less "popular" than American Heritage *(more emphasis on recent scholarship and research) but written for a far less specialized audience than the technical journals. One reader says that we're a sort of* Scientific American *for the humanities and social sciences.*

Another paid us a nice compliment: "I should tell you that yours is the only scholarly journal I regularly read from cover to cover."

The current issue is typical: It starts with an illustrated special section on the early political career of Harry S. Truman. The historians who wrote it say surprising things about HST's famous dealings with the Pendergast machine. There are a number of other good articles and a pile of reviews.

MASJ is frequently illustrated. And the editor makes a game effort to translate jargon, when it appears, into English. So MASJ is attractive and lively.

MASJ is edited by Stuart Levine at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, 66044. Subscriptions are handled by Professor J. Hauptmann, Park College, Parkville, Missouri, 64152. A copy costs $1.25; a year, $2.50; back issues, $1.50 (except for that Indian issue, with its un-scholarly 4-color cover: it costs $2.00). Make checks to MASJ. MASJ carries staid ads; rate card available.

Midcontinent AMERICAN STUDIES Journal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a wide range of economic groups, was developed; and by the early 1950s, Negro students from local high schools were achieving impressive academic standing in state and Northern colleges. Fifty years, from 1900 to 1950, had been shrewdly used by Negroes to build the structure of a viable economic and political community. During this time, the whites watched, even occasionally encouraging the efforts. But when the Negroes demanded integration in the public schools, this muted attentiveness took on all the elements of a ritual game. It was a segregationist *rite de passage*—instead of initiating the Negro into the political community, the whites leveled him to the status of the *tolerated* and the *kept*.

Bob Smith's *They Closed Their Schools*, a book of excellent reportage, chronicles this process of reduction, and lays open for clinical examination the machinery that did the job.

When the Supreme Court issued its original desegregation decision in 1954, the county's whites seized on the imprecisions and sketchiness of the decree. For the next five years, while whites collected funds for a private, segregated school system, the Court was led to believe that once the timetable and the conditions for integration were spelled out, the county would comply. But when clarification seemed possible, the county opted out of the area of public education—the only sphere to which the original Court decision applied. The courts were thus forced by the county's lawyers to analyze each of the traditional issues surrounding public education: whether the community could be compelled to levy school taxes and to operate public schools; whether a state had the right to public funds for use in the support of private education; and, most important, whether schools in other areas could be run by a state which had allowed a county to reject this function. Changing the legal situation, keeping the issues in a state of turmoil made the Court divert its energy to redefining the case. At the same time, the Court had to uproot the entangling state legislation which had permitted Prince Edward County's radical solution to the Negroes' demands. By the end of the lengthy exercise, integration had become a moot point. The schools finally opened with token mingling: an irritating reminder of the Negroes' failure in the arena of law.

The catastrophe also throws interesting light on the policy and strategy of the state NAACP, which seriously misjudged its potential in Prince Edward County. The NAACP never comprehended fully the close connection between Byrd machine politics and the plight of the Southside whites, and was constantly embarrassed at the skillfulness with which the state machine and the local defendants meshed their case of legal traps. Only rarely did it understand that the whites were almost uniformly segregationists, that there did not exist a group of white moderates who could have stopped the school closure. But the great failure of the NAACP was to provide a program for an agrarian community—which needed intensive cadre work in voting, farming and collective economic efforts. It believed that the struggle was a moral one. It sought the law, the courts, as vindication of the Negroes' moral stand, rather than economic or political persuasion. It simply did not have a concept or a plan for a secular political community.

Rhetoric, moral ideals and historical optimism: all these scuttled the Negroes' demands. When Negroes appeared weary of the interminable legal process, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP asked the local parents: "What are a few years of education in the name of freedom?" A Negro teacher, who advocated direct action, replied: "They are buying your minds with words, your politics, with speeches."

Prince Edward County Negroes, today, live in an unrewarding present and stoically accept their leveling. (In 1963, there were 2,000 illiterate youth, a refugee professional class, and many landless migratory farmers.) Ironically, because of their faith in the revolutionary slogans of American democracy, and because of their willingness to follow due process of law, the Negroes were reduced, as Smith puts it, by a battle which was "merely a clash of abstract ideology."

There is a serviceable end to which this lesson can be put, and Mr. Smith's book is valuable as an exercise in dissecting the *fictions* that encumber and vitiate our understanding of American political realities. The masquerade of the courts in Prince Edward County is a perfect example of the use of political fictions. The whites assumed that the courts were largely irrelevant to their objectives. They also understood that they stood to profit as long as the legal charades could be continued; this game gave the impression of dramatic action when there was none. The county's Negroes labored under the powerful fictions of judicial redress and legal triumph. The whites prescribed their fate, and the Negro leadership sealed it.

The Protestant ethic, the concept of groups owning neighborhoods, the notion of a majority granting legally assumed rights—these are fictions, too, operating as filters between American political and economic life and the Negro American. Not to discern this is to make a serious misconception as to our plight and struggle. Without this knowledge, the Negro could easily fail to become the formidable political force—in America and the world—that his past history promises.

WAR

Not bad, but miserable
Drenched in gray sadness
Lonely grief handed out to all.

SARAH MASON
(Age 10, United States)

From *Miracles*, Poems by children of the English-speaking world. Collected by Richard Lewis. Simon & Schuster. 214 pp. $4.95

I AM MISSISSIPPI FED

I am Mississippi fed,
I am Mississippi bred,
Nothing but a poor, black boy.

I am a Mississippi slave,
I shall be buried in a Mississippi grave,
Nothing but a poor, dead boy.

IDA RUTH GRIFFIN
(Age 12, Harmony, Carthage)

From *Freedom School Poetry*. Foreword by Langston Hughes. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Atlanta, Ga. 47 pp. $1.50.

WORLD'S BEST?

TRY IT AND SEE

☐ 7-month subscription —$4.79 (reg. $8 per year)
☐ Commentary Card catalog—10¢ (handsome reproductions of historic Jewish art)

COMMENTARY NA
165 East 56th Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

Name
Address
City State Zip

The Best Way To Get THE NATION

THE NATION 11-14-66
333 Sixth Ave., New York 10014

☐ One Year, $10
☐ Two Years, $18
☐ 6 Months, $6
☐ Bill Me ☐ Payment Enclosed
(Foreign and Canadian Postage $1 a year extra)

NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY .....
STATE ..... ZIP NO. .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How To Survive Childhood

THE CHILDREN. *By Charity Blackstock. Little, Brown & Co. 240 pp. $4.95.*

THE CHILDREN OF THE SOUTH. *By Margaret Anderson. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 208 pp. $4.95.*

MURRAY POLNER
Mr. Polner teaches contemporary civilization at Queens College of New York.

At first glance both of these sympathetic books deal with similar themes: the strains and stresses to which children under attack are subject, the immediate impact and the long-run emotional dangers. *The Children* is concerned with adolescent survivors of German concentration camps, while *The Children of the South* tells the story of Negro youngsters in a newly desegregated high school, a story which is, potentially, filled with hope.

Charity Blackstock's subjects were between 14 and 19 years old. She had become involved with them soon after the war when she joined a small group interested in helping survivors reach England for brief stays with Anglo-Jewish families. By profession a writer of suspense novels, an Englishwoman and a Gentile, and totally unfamiliar with the problems of the work for which she had volunteered, she nevertheless hung on for five years.

At first she sensed the futility of trying to surround the shattered children with a "normal" family; later she recognized the limits of mere compassion. The Jewish youngsters were filled with hate and cynicism, or were simply broken, "wild, tortured young animals." Suburban English families could not possibly "understand the state of mind of a boy who had, six years back, been dragged out of the gas chamber by his hair and flung into a mountain of corpses, where he lay for a day and a half until it was safe for him to crawl away." How, indeed, identify with the victims of "so stinking and evil an experience"? Most of the host families could not, and they complained constantly about the incorrigibly ungrateful youngsters whom Miss Blackstock had sent to them.

Charity Blackstock also found the past too much to overcome for the survivors. One of her favorite boys classified everyone he met as murderer or anti-Nazi. Two Parisian brothers patiently explained their post-camp philosophy: it was a rotten world, you had to keep on top, and only fellow survivors who were Jews as well could ever really understand what they were talking about. Years after the end of the war there was a mysterious outbreak of delirium and violent fever in the French Jewish children's home where Miss Blackstock then worked. The illness was never connected to a physical cause and she concludes by suggesting that perhaps "it was the final expulsion of the poison."

In her seven years' work with these youngsters she witnessed no dramatic psychological breakthroughs, no vindications of man's capacity for gentleness and greatness, and no sudden transformations. A few married. Others drifted. Nearly all the youngsters, however, had been hopelessly crushed.

Margaret Anderson's book describes a segment of our most beleaguered youngsters, the Negro students who had to run a gauntlet daily in Clinton, Tenn., in 1956, to attend their newly desegregated high school. Mrs. Anderson was both a teacher and guidance counselor in Clinton High School at that time. She recalls the mobs, segregationist John Kasper's activities, and the dynamiting of the school.

But she never loses sight of what it all meant to the Negro students. There was first of all the physical danger. Mothers with babies in their arms heaped incredible abuse on the Negro children and men threatened murder as they walked to their classes. Once inside, the normal security of the school day was denied them. Obscenities were whispered to girls, and boys were terrorized.

Nearly every Negro child she met while acting as guidance counselor found it impossible to cope with the widespread castigation of themselves as intruders responsible for the chaos and tensions in town. One Negro child had to return to her segregated school because of a renewal of asthma attacks. Another kept jumping up from her seat and running out the door because she thought pencils were aimed at her. A boy's speech difficulties returned years after they were thought to be under control. It will be of more than academic interest to learn what consequences our years of racial turmoil are having on all the children of all our people. Does anyone still think that education and time will automatically bring greater tolerance in its wake?

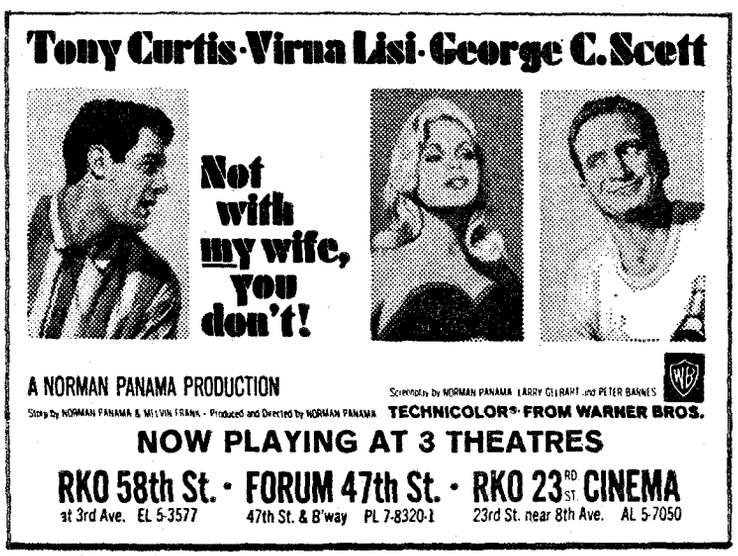
Someone recently suggested that we forget the anguish of the past and "start from now." Both these important books think it an impossible prescription—at least for those who lived through the pain of those times. Perhaps their children or grandchildren may be more dispassionate and forgiving.

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

It appears that Saul Bellow is now determined to devote himself to writing for the stage. We congratulate him on this resolve, not so much for his sake as for ours. He is a real writer; such men are sorely needed in our theatre. In his "evening of comedies," three one-act plays collectively entitled *Under the Weather* (Cort Theatre), he has chosen to give us something from the lighter side of his talent: the sportive, the odd, the eccentric.

Bellow's Herzog wrote many letters. Some were pathetic or painful, others seriously ideologic. Still others revealed Herzog as a bit of a nut. *Under the Weather* is conceived in the latter vein. The three one-act plays are farces through which Bellow seems to be relieving himself of impulses and anxieties that oppress his spirit. When objectified as "stories" they become laughably "far out." They


Tony Curtis·Virna Lisi·George C.Scott
Not with my wife, you don't!
A NORMAN PANAMA PRODUCTION
Screenplay by NORMAN PANAMA, LARRY GELBART and PETER BARNES
Story by NORMAN PANAMA & MELVIN FRANK · Produced and Directed by NORMAN PANAMA
TECHNICOLOR® FROM WARNER BROS.
NOW PLAYING AT 3 THEATRES
RKO 58th St. · FORUM 47th St. · RKO 23RD ST. CINEMA
at 3rd Ave. EL 5-3577
47th St. & B'way PL 7-8320-1
23rd St. near 8th Ave. AL 5-7050

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are like those wild dreams which seem utterly ridiculous when recalled in the light of the morning. Still, they are unaccountably depressing. *Under the Weather* is comic and disturbing.

Part 1, "the weather picture in the Northeast," is about a middle-aged drug salesman—he has a Bachelor of Science degree—who induces a heart attack in himself to avoid marrying his old sweetheart, now widowed. We are uncertain that this is truly his motive, but it would seem so. Though overabundantly fleshed and no longer young, Flora Sharkey makes the impression of an eminently suitable mate for the complacently ailing (or hypochondriac) Harry Faufill. She is eager, enthusiastic, energetic and hysterically helpful. Despite all this, Faufill wants out and so arranges for his collapse. Laughter and puzzlement!

Part 2, "the weather in the Southeast," presents Solomon Ithimar, a top-secret atomic scientist on his way to a cosmically significant conference in Geneva. He stops off at a third-rate Miami hotel to see a childhood flame with whom he has since had no contact; she is a respectably married Jewish matron, Marcella Vankuchen. To what end? The memory which has sustained him through his rise from butcher's son to nuclear eminence was the sight vouchsafed him by Marcella during their pre-adolescent sex games of a tiny wen located in the region of her genitals. Nothing since that first intimacy has ever so stirred him. The great man pleads in an ecstasy of anticipation and in fear of rejection for permission to behold the magic spot once again and thus regain his capacity for pure elation.

If I am circuitous in stating this circumstance it is probably because Ithimar, like so many mental giants, is given to protracted verbal ejaculations. One is not sure if this logorrhea is simply a form of humor cultivated by Bellow to mock intellectuals whose tensions manifest themselves through an enormous spill of words (he uses the device in several of his novels), or if it is a kind of artful padding —the rhetoric of comedy—to compensate for a lack of characterization through developed action. In any case, what makes this episode memorable is the dry nervous squiggle of the impotent Big Brain whom Bellow, very ably abetted by Harry Towb as Ithimar, caricatures. I should add that the type has become familiar to me through much frequentation of literary parties. On that account alone these events are seldom pleasant experiences. Some of their uneasiness rubs off on this part of *Under the Weather*.

Part 3, "the weather picture for the Midwest," is the most telling. Hilda, a prostitute of Polish origin, begs Pennington, an octogenarian millionaire whom she has been serving in monthly installments over the years, to set her sister up in a dress shop. This skit is notable for its exposure of a not uncommon male attitude toward sex. It is crudely functional. Hilda is a domestic personality: she is patient, understanding and in her own way faithful. Pennington pays for her services but resents the intrusion of sentiment or any recognition of her except as an instrument of his need.

Do the three parts of the evening purport to be pencil sketches of grotesque aspects of American masculinity? The gamut runs from fear through employment of neurotic surrogates to cold and unfeeling possession as a touchstone of power. Since the plays on the whole are unpretentious, one cannot be sure that this is the plan. The effect is of a writer of complex talent still insecure in handling a medium to which he is not accustomed. He appears to be expressing fringe facets of his moral and psychosomatic self. We might describe the process metaphorically as that of an artist who took to depicting special portions of his anatomy—the tips of his fingers, the points of his elbows, the space between his toes—rather than his essential being. The result stimulates curiosity without being gratifying.

While Harry Towb in the three roles is offered the opportunity of altering his mask from asinine burgher, to jittery genius, to ludicrously superannuated powerhouse, Shelley Winters is for the most part effectively consigned to the role of feminine victim. It is her most satisfying stage performance to date. She gasps, sighs and moans in a mellifluous monotone which is at once humorous and touching.

The line of Arthur Storch's direction seems too close to "realism" and thus fails to capture the peculiar elements of "fantasy" which are woven into Bellow's writing. But his task has not been an easy one. I believe *Under the Weather* might fare better, commercially as well as artistically, somewhere or anywhere off Broadway. The New York midtown framework is damaging to such enterprises.

It so happens that goon writing, acting and direction are immediately available for observation in *How's the World Treating You?* by Roger Milner at the Music Box. Peter Bayliss and, much more startlingly as well as brilliantly, Patricia Routledge, are there on display in a variety of madly eccentric patterns and postures. Hardly any of our American actresses are capable of the kind of virtuosity in comic distortion of which Miss Routledge is a master. The mode seems to be an English specialty.

The trouble is that the evening is much too long for its special attraction: each act alone would be sufficient. Then, too, the quips and images are so thoroughly British (*Punch* to the nth degree) that most of our playgoers probably find them as weirdly foreign as an "in" joke of the Hottentot social register. The coin has no currency here.

ART / Max Kozloff

It occasionally happens that one is reluctantly forced to describe an intriguing work of art by what it is not. Similarities that it may have with other art, or simply the already known, have to be stripped away because they ring false. Confusing this issue, a pictorial apparatus may not altogether account for an effect. Or a formal element may not do what it had previously, in other circumstances, not hesitated to do. Parts, in this instance, resist adding up to a whole, although a whole there certainly is. And all this can grow under the aegis of some obscure negation that has yet the peculiar grace *not* to be malign. Such, I would say, is roughly the situation with the current pictures of Agnes Martin, at the Robert Elkon Gallery.

For example, they are ostensibly field paintings, worked all over, which nevertheless ask to be "read" as is type face. In addition, their oyster or buff white façades, each 6 x 6 feet, somehow suggest an errant tonality, and an induced colorism. They are flat pictures, too, that still get back rapidly into space without so much as even a token value change. Martin's work, then, is not geometric; it is not reductionist in the usual sense; neither does it purvey a serial or a single image. So far, this is easily enough observed. But it still leaves unexplained those diverse presences on the walls which finally bow out from being even paintings—since paintings are materialized by pigment, rather than as here given face mostly by pencil.

Large canvases drawn upon as if to resemble magnified graphs are what physically meet the eye. Uninflected, incessant horizontal rulings are met by somewhat weaker or less frequent vertical ones, evenly spaced. On certain canvases, a mid-key ground relieves white tracings, like a solarized print. Mechanisti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cally straight, the lines, fine tipped as they are, flake or granulate minutely over the acrylic primed cotton. Further, the micro-intervals of these works seem to contract upon examination. They hover on the verge of becoming tone, but never lose their porosity. Moreover, one sees through variously regulated meshes that are translucent without being luminous, gridded without being discretely structured. Less noticeably, these pictures conceptually pair with one another, in the manner of alter egos. The same checker pattern is grounded by gray and eggshell in two separate instances; and a channel sequence whitens where it remains bare in the pendant. It is like stepping in and out of the shade, or better, half-light.

One might be tempted to dismiss this self-contained display as "sensitive," were it not uttered in deliberately matter-of-fact language. Still less should it be called monotonous, since it yields the most differentiated sensations. In the quietest way, the pictures invoke a kind of visual raveling that tautens their unstressed webbing. Largely this is because, as energy flows everywhere and nowhere at the same time, the eye requires, or plucks at, a focus, just as an organism exhibits a tropism. But this is no primitive experience. I was aware not merely of the impoverished materials but of their diffident, and elegant, seizure of my attention. It is an indication of how ramified is this art that its sensuality exists more richly and vividly as a psychological state than as physical fact. One is beguiled into unforeseen expectancies, of landscape, for example, or sky, because there is no alternative to viewing Agnes Martin's canvases as screens for unfigurated seeing. Here emerges the crux of her work for, without giving the beholder the faintest nuance or pictorial transition, it conjures an atmosphere and a rather airy one at that. This is all the more startling because the tactility of each work arises from nothing more than the physically even-pressured meeting of pencil and canvas. All other shaping or activity is banished to the choice of framework which remains ultimately an intellectual conception. The show stands midpoint, therefore, between the sensibility of the early fifties, with its loosely structured and empathetic recall of the outer world, and the "computerized" pictorial systems of today. It is a condition perhaps emphasized by the fact that the artist herself is of the middle generation. I am reminded by this exhibition of Valéry's remarks on the paintings of Berthe Morisot: "Made up of nothing, they multiply that nothing, a suspicion of mist or swans, with a supreme tactile art, the skill of a brush that scarcely feathers the surface. But that featheriness conveys all . . . the great gift . . . for reducing matter to a minimum and thus giving the strongest possible impression of an act of mind. . . ."

The Lucas Samaras exhibition at the Pace Gallery delights me with the knowledge that art can be a proper receptacle for all those impulses which in social life would be abashing or atrocious. The work simultaneously represents the degree to which the artist can purge himself of his fantasies (or outright sublimate them), and creates the distance necessary for his public to see them as in a sense ordered, and unthreatening. How gentle, in fact, it all seems, now that it is possible to view these images in the light of artistic metaphor.

It has already been noted that his prickly objects enact some aboriginal defense which may also maim, puncture or slice. They are the porcupines of modern art. Yet Samaras hardly considers himself a practitioner of standoffishness: "the manner in which art objects are made are [*sic*] erotic gestures. The Greek word lick and sculpt is the same. Artistic-creation-eroticism may be a substitute for genital-biological-creation-eroticism, however the eroticism is experienced in the brain in either case. . . . The erotic isn't connected with life and death . . . it is continuous. . . . Narcissism is making one's body into art." It apparently also means making one's house into art, and each of its furnishing or articles into reliquaries of one's own eroticism. From his words, one would never guess that Samaras has a St. Sebastian complex, and that he equates the erotic with the enthralling nightmare of self-impalement. But it hardly ends even here: "To be an artist is to be god (an ambi-sexual one, no doubt), and I don't know anything more erotic than that." The Pace show is a veritable cosmos of open nerve ends, of touchy, tacky, tingly glamour germinating everywhere from the inanimate. Indeed, one of his typical fancies is to figuratively X-ray himself (in drawings), preferably his colon and spine, seen under a spangled, celestial milky way.

This iconography is paraphiliac and callow in about equal measure. Many would even consider it juvenile, which hardly invalidates it as a basis for creating art. Perhaps the most remarkable illustration of the effect to which Samaras can put it is his new 8-foot-high room, its walls, floors and ceilings completely covered with mirrored panels. It will most literally expand the consciousness of any who enters it, repeating or showing him off from "impossible" worm's eye, or overhead multiple views in a gaudy display of omniscience. In terms of creative process, the artist can be imagined giddily incarcerating himself in such a chamber—of the mind.

If solipsism is the watchword that unites his boxes with their hypodermics, his pin-covered leaning chairs, his colored yarn whorls, bent forks, and razor-blade cocktails, Samaras also joins an eccentric tradition in American art. His work stands, it seems to me, between the nostalgic jewel cases of Joseph Cornell, and the bone-chain-glass-eye aggregations of Alfonso Ossorio. But he is not as poetic as the first, nor anywhere near as brutish as the second. There is a rather calculated effeminacy about his effects that allies him, at times, with the chiffon-swathed, yet ghastly ashes and pearl concoctions of Bruce Conner.

But such a comparison, oddly enough, makes him look only the more detached. The further one studies a Samaras assemblage, the more convincing does it appear as an abstract, even decorative, object. But I hasten to add that this abstraction seems to arise out of its own obsessive elaboration of patterns, opposed to any liaison with the current repeating formats of abstract art. Then too, Samaras' *horror vacuii* has pointillist connotations:

WFF'N PROOF

The GAME for THINKERS

Can you solve this problem?

1. There are three numbered statements in this box.
2. Two of these numbered statements are not true.
3. The average increase in I.Q. scores of those who learn to play WFF 'N PROOF is more than 20 points.

Is statement No. 3 true?

A NEW DIMENSION IN EDUCATIONAL GAMES

WFF 'N PROOF: The GAME of MODERN LOGIC $6.00 (plus $.50 postage and handling)

EQUATIONS: The GAME of CREATIVE MATHEMATICS $3.00 (plus $.50 postage and handling)

ON-SETS: The GAME of SET THEORY $4.00 (plus $.50 postage and handling)

by Professor Layman E. Allen

Box 71-MY New Haven, Conn.

Please send me .....WFF 'N PROOF .....ON-SETS .....EQUATIONS

I enclose $ ..... and understand that if I am not completely satisfied, I can return the games in 10 days for a full refund of the purchase price.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State ..... Zip .....

Refund and return privileges guaranteed!

Dealer Inquiries Invited

WFF'N PROOF

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pinheads serve as color molecules or breakups of chromatic grounds—all delicately reiterated. His earlier fascination with the optical changes made by overlaps of colored plastics is another aspect of that decorative instinct which is yet tinged with a slightly panic groping toward infinity.

In the end, Samaras accomplishes with ease the transfer of banal and repulsive materials into an uncanny glitter. It is a situation for which the Surrealist derivations of his works do not, in themselves, give account. Some larger impulse within seems to have carried him past preciosity: a creative principle to which all motifs are subsumed. Whether it be in the dainty homeliness of his execution, his capacity to change scale from very small to grand, or in the menagerie of his sensations, one perceives a prodigal imagination. It feeds upon itself, but in doing so, grinds up, or rather pulverizes, the psycho-sexual alarms that can also be found within ourselves.

FILMS / Robert Hatch

Chusingura is the finest movie spectacle I have ever seen. These gargantuan epics are not my idea of how best to use the screen, but this tale of Japan's forty-seven samurai martyrs to honor is the only picture of the sort that I have ever sat through in willing captivity or could contemplate seeing again.

Partly, the acceptance stems from the exoticism of the work. A legend of 18th-century Japan inevitably contains more novelty and pleasant surprise than can be expected in accounts of Genesis, Lawrence of Arabia, or the Winning of the West, as imagined by our commercial film makers. But partly the film's lure is intrinsic. It is in the first place extraordinarily and unfailingly beautiful in its sites and settings. Hiroshi Inagaki, the directors, does not fall into the frequent Western fallacy of bringing legend down to earth; he sets his tale against a background painstakingly designed to ravish the eyes. Beyond that, the film is performed in a mannered and polished style that maintains an edge of elegance and control in the sprawl of plot. *Chusingura* is pageantry and dance, ceremony and tourney; it is never happenstance.

For a Japanese, the film may be an occasion of patriotism, even of piety, but Western viewers do best, I think, to sink into it passively, as into a reverie. It is so long (three and a half hours) and moves with such deliberation from one fist of violence to the next, that if you try to participate in its narrative you will find yourself stumbling ahead of the action. Moreover, the motivations of the work make to Western minds a kind of dream sense. The emotions—pride, loyalty, greed, vengeance—are familiar enough, but with us they are balanced, negotiated and transposed according to different formulas. Not even in feudalism or the code of chivalry can one find satisfying parallels to the behavior of these warrior lords and their ladies. What the protagonists do is clear and consistent enough, but I think it would be impossible except in a dream for an Occidental to "feel" them doing it.

So for us *Chusingura* is inevitably a partial experience. It offers visual pleasure at a superb level of restrained taste and provides teasing insights into the springs of a complex and remote psychology. But for all its redundant and implacable violence, it does not offer us the satisfying resolution of tragedy or the exhilaration of participation in heroic affairs that presumably its countrymen can derive from it. It becomes clearer all the time, I think, that world brotherhood, if it ever comes, will rest on mutual trust and tolerance at least as much as on shared understanding.

The Czech film, *Loves of a Blonde*, was apparently the darling of the New York Film Festival, and it is indisputably an endearing film. The trouble with it is that it is easier to like than to admire; less art than artless.

For one thing, it is curiously ill-constructed. The first third at least of its running time is devoted to the attempts of three middle-aged soldiers to pick up a trio of factory girls in a provincial dance hall. This provides a certain amount of feckless merriment, but it goes on much too long for patience or plausibility, and it has only the most tenuous connection with the main story, which is of a love affair between one of the girls and the piano player from Prague who is on the platform that evening.

The heart of this tale, which amounts to little more than a short, is that the heroine is as direct in action as she is naive in spirit. Some time during the night, her musical seducer (he employs the "I can feel you don't trust me" technique, which is still apparently new to the girls of the Czech hinterland) says she must come to Prague some day, and advances his purpose still further by giving her the address of the flat he shares with his parents. So a quick hitchhike later, the parents are confronted late in the night with what looks to them very much like a stray cat. When the boy comes home after being outwitted by a Prague girl who understands piano players, the family goes into a slapstick round of mutual recriminations that ends with the three of them thrashing about in one bed and the girl weeping her eyes out on the other side of the door. We are told in a sequel that everything works out splendidly, a prognosis I didn't for a moment believe after catching a glimpse of the hero's taste in Prague girls.

This is life, defined and performed at the level of television romance (and photographed with the camera 6 inches from everyone's nose). I like it well enough, but I'm surprised that we need to import it.

THE COWGIRL BALL

for Gene Autry

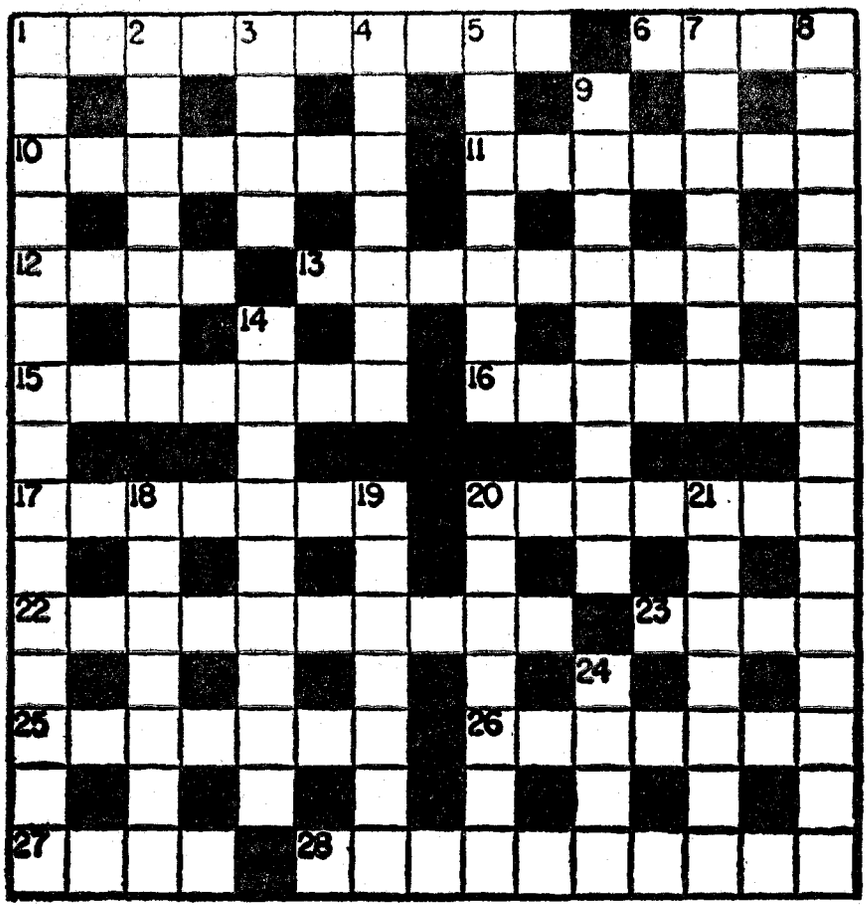
When you jumped into the snowy wagon headed
for the Cowgirl Ball your mommy pinched herself
and spoke in measured syllables:
"Yas yas, I regonice you by your farmer cheese smell,
Yas, I regonice you by your tacky nose."
Guessing her mind, you offered
up a pail of blue eats to make her sick and
you gave her an "aeroplane surprise."
A daisy mugging by the roadside got a coat of old
dust for its trouble. You had no time for nature
studies, you were off to the Cowgirl Ball!
The opening ceremony was me
Firing a raft cannon to provide the merrymakers
with a chance to speculate on how fast I would leave
the lake backwards.

MICHAEL SILVERTON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Crossword Puzzle No. 1175

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Mat finishes seem to, being dull. (10)
6 and 24 down How to grab a bellhop implies no effort. (8)
10 One way to write a few bars — in Holst's "Planets" at last! (7)
11 You might find his position fits you, if you're a real performer. (7)
12 A bird might be one, twice. (4)
13 A spirit on the mountain can prove intangible. (10)
15 The end lies broken in a flax producer. (7)
16 A body in the rear? (7)
17 Just delivered? (7)
20 Yield? It starts to sound this way, phonetically. (7)
22 One doesn't coil the spring in front or back, evidently, like a little one with a rattle. (10)
23 Might be a composition, or it might compose it. (4)
25 The result has nothing in it but an offering from the mound. (7)
26 Lingua franca of Africa. (7)
27 Is it a job to pay it when things come in? (4)
28 The sort of inane press some poetry gets? (10)

DOWN:

1 To a great extent, is earth solid, or is it just water? (4, 6, 5)
2 It turns on after the top title. (7)
3 All-out boor? Not little Albert! (4)
4 The traditional American beauty was long this. (7)
5 Pull out of the passage? (7)
7 Not like the novice's liquor? (7)
8 One of those parliamentary procedures continually turning up in Strauss's works. (9, 6)
9 Is the man who works in one likely to be a ringer? (9)
14 Do wool men make proper bows with it? (9)
18 Descriptive of seers on the far left and right, in a rather broad circle of acquaintances. (4-3)
19 Such trains are not, at 21. (7)
20 Keep moving the decal's directions. (5, 2)
21 At both ends of the line? (7)
24 See 6 across.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 1174

ACROSS: 1 Downhearted; 9 Hittites; 10 and 3 down United Nations; 11 Crimson; 12 Chassis; 14 Breaks; 15 and 23 Virginia Woolf; 17 Studious; 22 Ragweed; 24 Expanse; 26 Verona; 28 and 20 across After-dinner speech. DOWN: 2 and 27 Of Time and the River; 4 Elsa; 5 Rougher; 6 Exits; 7 Mirror; 8 Medici; 13 Avast; 16 Iterative; 18 Trades; 19 Overage; 20 Sixteen; 21 Caster; 25 Stud.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis' "ground rules." Address requests to Puzzle Dept., *The Nation*, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10014

PUBLICATIONS

THE FIRST TIME I LIVE
by Will Slotnikoff
Discursive Introduction by Henry Miller
A romantic book about the writing of a book and the birth of a writer. Includes an exchange of letters with Henry Miller on the Creative Process in Action.
Paperback, $2.25 postpaid, 238 pp.
MANCHESTER LANE EDITIONS
1409 Nicholson St., N. W.
Washington 11, D.C.
Also available through Gotham Book Mart

"SELECTED POEMS" of George Flynn (Villiers of London $2.00) is "the most exciting American poetry since Ezra Pound."—James Turner. **Available in U.S. from the author at 514 — 82 St., Brooklyn 9, N. Y.**

THE IDLER. Lively, offbeat liberal monthly. Fun to read. Send $2 for trial year's subscription. **IDLER, 413B 6th Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.**

ART

ORIGINALS COST LESS THAN REPRODUCTIONS! Contemporary original signed etchings, lithographs, woodcuts, $3.50. Guarantee. Free brochure. **GRAPHIC CIRCLE (NA), 68 Fifth Avenue, N.Y.C. 10011.**

SERVICES

MOVING? Professional moving at competitive rates. Anytime, anywhere. Licensed, insured, experienced. **THE COVERED WAGON, ALgonquin 5-1788 (N.Y.C.)**

EDUCATIONAL

THE THOREAU SCHOOL. Five day boarding, grades five through eight. An intimate, cooperative community, combining study with the tasks and joys of country living. School bus brings your children home weekends to New York City. Now enrolling for opening September, 1967. **Write: Rodman, RD 1, Wallkill, N.Y. Phone: 914-895-5523.**

CAN YOUR CHILD READ?
Teach him fast yourself with dramatic new method.
Children 4½ easily learn to read fluently almost anything in English long before they go to school. Rapid results with remedial, adults. Make money tutoring other people's children.
Complete instructions, all necessary reading material, etc. Send $8.00 plus 25 cents postage to:
PHONIC LANGUAGE ARTS
Post Office Box 4321
Stockton, California

BUY YOUR BOOKS through *The Nation*

Nation readers can avail themselves of our offer to send them any book (except paperbacks), published in the U.S., at the regular retail price post-free. When ordering, please give name and author and publisher, if possible. Remittance must accompany order. Make checks payable to **The Nation.**

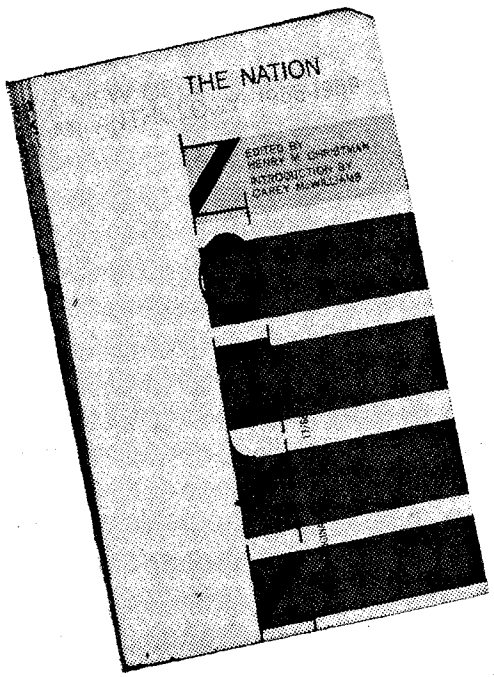
Please address your orders to

THE NATION
Reader's Service Division
333 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10014

Composition by R.C.R. Publication Printers Corp., N.Y.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FREE with every **new** subscription



A View of The Nation

An anthology edited by Henry M. Christman, introduction by Carey McWilliams, 269 pages

This handsome book, published by Grove Press, collects some of the best articles that have appeared in *The Nation.* Among the thirty-seven contributors: C. Vann Woodward, Kenneth Rexroth, David Cort, Harry Golden, Kenneth Burke, George P. Elliott, Fred J. Cook, Harvey Swados, Dan Wakefield, Eve Merriam, Walter Goodman, Josephine Herbst, J. Bronowski, Walter Millis. Robert Fulford, book editor of the Toronto *Daily Star*, refers to the contents as "*The Nation*'s fresh voice" and adds: "*A View of The Nation* serves as a reminder that *The Nation*, at its best, is a very good magazine indeed."

For your FREE copy of *A View of The Nation*, fill out the subscription coupon at right, and start receiving *The Nation*, this country's oldest (1865) weekly journal of dissenting opinion.

THE NATION, 333 6th Avenue, New York 10014

Herewith my order for a new subscription (not a renewal) to The Nation. Please send me FREE a copy of A View of The Nation.

☐ One Year, $10 ☐ Two Years, $18 ☐ Six Months, $6

☐ Payment Enclosed ☐ Bill Me

(Foreign and Canadian postage: $1 a year extra)

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State ..... Zip No. .....

11-14-66

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED